

THE *Phil Wolfe!*
Fatal Marriage;

OR, THE
Innocent Adultery.

A
TRAGEDY.

By Mr. T. SOUTHERN.

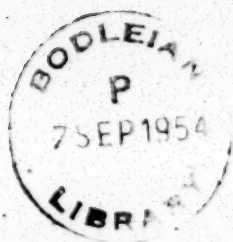
Pellex ego facta mariti——— Ovid.



1:0 ———

DUBLIN:

Printed by and for GEORGE GRIERSON,
at the *Two Bibles* in *Essex-Street*, 1722.





TO

Ant. Hammond, Esq;

OF

SOMERSHAM-PLACE.

S I R,

I Have so many Obligations upon me, that to bring in a fair Account of my Debts, is all that lies in the present Power of my Honesty: In the first place, I thankfully confess my self indebted to the Good-nature of the Town in general: Then, in the deepest sense of my Gratitude, I acknowledge the Indulgence and Patronage of particular Men of Quality, who were almost industrious and contriving for the Fortune of this Play; to make it considerable to the World in its Reputation; and to me in the Profit of the Third Day. I think it becomes every Man's Character to be pleased with pleasing others; and I know, that to be pleas'd is full as much as I ought to be upon the Success of any thing that I can attempt in this kind; my Poetry will never run away with me; but the good Fortune of finding so many Honourable Patrons, I must confess, has transported me;

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and if I am a little vain now, 'tis from their good Opinion of me, and not from what I think of my self. I took the hint of the Tragical part of this play, from a Novel of Mrs. *Behn's*, call'd *The Fair Vow-breaker*; you will forgive me for calling it a hint, when you find I have little more than borrow'd the Question, how far such a distress was to be carry'd, upon the misfortune of a Woman's having innocently two Husbands, at the same time. I have given you a little taste of Comedy with it, not from my own Opinion, but the present Humour of the Town: I never contend that, because I think every reasonable Man will, and ought to govern in the Pleasures he pays for: I had no occasion for the Comedy, but in the three first Acts, which Mrs. *Bracegirdle* particularly diverted, by the beauty and gayety of her Action; and tho' I was fond of coming to the serious part, I should have been very well pleas'd (if it had been possible to have woven her into that interest) to have had her company to the end of my Journey. I could not, if I would, conceal what I owe Mrs. *Barry*; and I should despair of ever being able to pay her, if I did not imagine that I have been a little accessary to the great Applause, that every Body gives her, in saying she out-plays her self; if she does that, I think we may all agree never

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to expect, or desire any Actor to go beyond that Commendation. I made the Play for her part, and her part has made the Play for me; it was a helpless infant in the Arms of the Father, but has grown under her care; I gave it just motion enough to crawl into the World, but by her Power, and Spirit of playing, she has breath'd a Soul into it, that may keep it alive. I hope I have, in some measure, discharg'd myself to the Publick; but for fear of the worst, Sir, I have brought you for my security; because I always found you in Nature inclining to be responsible for your Friends; you have allow'd me that title, and I thank you for it; but I value my self upon your being as heartily dispos'd to give it, as I was desirous to receive it. I cannot but remember some passages, that would become your character, and this Dedication of my Friendship to you; but I must be silent; and 'tis the hard part of your Favours, that you won't allow 'em to be acknowledg'd; I can never speak enough to my Obligation, and never little enough to your Modesty; when I would be grateful, I shall be troublesome; and I know you too well, to think you will be pleas'd with what I can publickly say of you. Every Man, who knows you, will think I say very little, and they, who are to know you, will find I have said nothing. You
are

The Epistle Dedicatory.

are rising upon the World, and every creature is the better for you, that's near you; and as *Juvenal* says of his Emperor: *Sat. 7. Materiamque tibi vestra indulgentia quærit.* I may speak of your Virtues, and good qualities, tho' you won't allow me to be a Witness to the World of the frequent Occasions you have found out to employ 'em. If Generosity with Friendship, Learning with sound Sense, true Wit, and Humour, with good Nature, be Accomplishments to qualify a Gentleman for a Patron, I am sure I have lit right in Mr. *Hammond*. I have reason to think I have made you my Friend; and you shall have reason to believe that you have secur'd me to be,

S I R,

Your Humble Servant,

T. Southern.



PROLOGUE,

WHEN once a poet settles an ill name,
Let him write well, or ill, 'tis all the same :
For criticks now-a-days like flocks of sheep,
All follow, when the first has made the leap.
And, do you justice, most are well inclin'd
To censure faults you know not how to find :
Some cavil at the stile, and some the actors ;
For, right or wrong, we pass for malefactors.
Some well-bred persons carp at the decorum,
As if they bore the drawing-room before 'em.
Sometimes your soft respectful spark discovers,
Our ladies are too coming to their lovers ;
For they who still pursue, but ne'er enjoy,
In every case expect a siege of Troy.
There are some others too who offer battle,
And wish their time, and place, maul Aristotle.
Ask what they mean, and after some grimace,
They tell you, twelve's the time ; and for the place,
The chocolate-house at the looking glass.
To please such judges, some have tir'd their brains,
And almost had their labour for their pains :
After a twelve-month vainly spent in plotting,
These metled criticks cry 'tis good for nothing ;
But wiser authors turn their plots upon you,
And plot to purpose when they get your money.

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Count Baldwin, Father to *Biron* and *Carlos*.
Biron, marry'd to *Isabella*, suppos'd dead.
Carlos, his younger Brother.
Villeroy, in Love with *Isabella*, Marries her.
Frederick, a Friend to *Carlos*.
Fernando, Husband to *Julia*.
Fabian, his Son.
Jaqueline, *Frederick's* Servant.
Sampson, Porter to *Count Baldwin*.
A Child of *Isabella's* by *Biron*.
Bellford, a Friend of *Biron's*.
Pedro, a Servant to *Carlos*.

W O M E N.

Isabella, marry'd to *Biron* and *Villeroy*.
Julia, Wife to *Fernando*.
Viktoria, *Fernando's* Daughter.
Nurse to *Biron*.

Officers, Servants, Men and Women.

The SCENE, *BRUSSELS*.

THE



THE
Fatal Marriage;
OR, THE
Innocent Adultery.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *the Street.*

Fabian comes in before Frederick and Jaqueline.

FABIAN.



MUCH an unlucky accident! such a misfortune!

Fred. What is't, *Fabian*?

Fab. A catching distemper; 'twill infect every body that comes near me: the tokens will appear on the faces of my friends, in a day or two; and all the professions they have made to my prosperity, will cool into a compliment of condolance; a civil salutation of the hat in haste; and end in the usual form of, your humble servant: with the hearty hope of never seeing me again.

Fred.

The Fatal Marriage;

Fred. This is the old quarrel between your father and you.

Fab. Ev'n so: my liberal, conscientious, loving, well-dispos'd father has forbid me his house; and civilly desir'd me to seek my fortune.

Fred. O, you must expect to be dis-inherited twice or thrice, to try your obedience, before you're the better for him. But it happens unluckily at this time: what will become of the ladies?

Fab. 'Tis that troubles me: to be turn'd out of doors, when I had honestly undertook the making my mother-in-law's, and sister's fortune, as well as my own. I have promoted the design as far as I could: I hope you and *Carlos* will carry it on. There's a letter from my sister [*Gives him a letter.*] to desire your assistance: I think she wants nothing but an opportunity of running away with you.

Fred. That I have settled in a letter to her. [*Feeling for his letter.*] I have contriv'd her escape, but how to send it now——

Jag. That, Sir, I think, falls under my employment; let me alone for the letter.

Fab. There's an old gentleman coming this way will certainly deliver it.

Jag. Gad, and so he shall: 'tis very well thought upon: Sir, your most humble servant. The letter, the letter, Sir; [*To Frederick.*] I'll do your business, I warrant you.

Fred. I have left it unfortunately behind me upon my table: *Jaqueline*, make haste and bring it me.

[*Jaqueline runs out.*]

Fab. I have it in my head to be reveng'd of this old fellow: run away with my sister; be sure, whatever you do: rely upon the old man's conscience to give her a portion: all that I can do for you——is to pray (tho' I think there will be no great need of my prayers) that he will never give you a shilling. [*Aside.*] *Carlos*, I suppose, knows how to behave himself between a handsome young lady, my mother-in-law, and a comely old fellow, my father. When we are all in

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 3

rebellion, a general pardon must follow. [Exit.

Fernando enters to Frederick.

Fern. Sure I saw just now a glimpse of my rakely son shoot by the corner there : hark you, friend, was not one *Fabian* with you before I came ?

Fred. Your son *Fabian*, Sir ? he was here but just now.

Fern. My son ! hum ! he may be your son, if you like him ; for I disown him.

Fred. Ay, so I hear indeed : 'tis a thousand pities, a pretty gentleman, as he is——

Fern. A pretty gentleman ! yes truly, he's a very pretty gentleman : when you can find nothing that a cock-comb is good for, but to spend money, you cry, he's a pretty gentleman. What, I suppose you were with him last night, a serenading (as you pretty gentlemen call it ;) but in my language, 'tis catterwawling ; good for nothing but to disturb a civil neighbourhood ; waken our wives into wicked wishes, and put 'em in mind of younger fellows than their husbands.

Fred. You mistake me, Sir——

Fern. I don't know whether I mistake you : but I'm sure, among other his enormities of last night, had not a less rascal of the company interpos'd, that *Fabian* you speak of would have carry'd me bodily away with him, in the case of a base viol.

Fred. Nay, then he is to blame indeed.

Fern. To blame, do you call it !

Fred. I hope I shall make you a better son, Sir, if you please to accept of me : I have made my applications to you a great while.

Fern. Hold, hold, Sir ; I have plague enough with those children I have already ; I want no more, I thank you. What, I warrant you, you'll say I have a handsome daughter ; why, very well : and every body will say I have a handsome wife.

Fred. Yes, indeed Sir, every body must say your wife is a very fine lady.

Fern. O, must they so ? why how do I know then, that you han't as great a mind to my wife, as you have

to

The Fatal Marriage ;

to my daughter ? you look as if you would rather help to bring some more children into my family, than take any out of it : but I shall watch you for spoiling my wife's shape, I promise you. 'Tis very hard upon marry'd men, that's the truth on't : 'tis a sin, and a shame, there should be so many ways of making a cuckold ; when there are so few, or none to prevent it. Now are you going to put in a long answer to every particular, but I shall save you the trouble. [Going.

Fred. Sir, I shan't think it a trouble——

Fern. To make me a cuckold ? no, no, I believe.

Fred. You won't understand me.

Fern. I do understand you.

Fred. Then, Sir, I leave the business entirely to your prudence to manage according to your discretion.

Fern. Is the devil in the fellow ? because I understand that he has a design upon my wife, he says, he leaves me to manage it according to my discretion. Why perhaps you expect I should pimp for you : are not you a very impudent fellow ? or is this your way of proceeding with the husband ? from this time forward you shall not so much as see my wife through a double-barr'd Window ; and to put you out of all other hopes, I will marry my daughter very shortly to a friend of my own that will deserve her. [Going.

Fred. Will you resolve, without hearing me ?

Jaqueline enters to 'em.

Fern. Resolve ! why I do resolve to have nothing to say to you ; to you, nor your rogue there, that follows you. Odd ! that fellow looks very suspiciously.

Jaq. Sir, Sir, say your pleasure of my master, or to my master ; but don't disparage my countenance : what have you to say to my face ?

Fern. Why I don't like it.

Jaq. Nay, nay, if that be all——

Fern. But that is not all ; I say moreover that you must be a very impudent fellow, that can keep such a face in countenance.

Jaq. Sir, I would have you to know, what it seems you are ignorant of, that whatever you take me to be, Sir, I am a gentleman, Sir. *Fern.*

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.*

5

Fern. Nay, keep your distance, friend, however. A gentleman, say you! like enough: take a pick-pocket into custody, and upon the first question of his roguery, he shall answer I'm a gentleman. You never hear of a fellow to be hang'd, tho' for stealing of a clean shirt, but he's a gentleman; and such a gentleman I could allow you to be, if you were going to the gallows.

[*Fernando going.*]

Jaq. What the devil shall I do with my letter? Sir, Sir, under your favour one word; I beg your pardon, Sir, if my master has said any thing to disoblige you-----; lord, Sir, you lovers have bad memories. ——— [To Frederick.] my master has forgot his main business with you, Sir [To Fernando.] you have forgot the mony you came about, Sir. [To Frederick.]

Fern. Mony, friend! if you came about mony, I can hear you.

Fred. What mony do'st talk of? I want no mony.

Jaq. Pray, Sir, pardon me; I am your steward, and knows your wants; you do want—— and I want—— [Shews the letter and makes signs.] pox on him, he won't apprehend me.

Fred. There's something to be done with that letter: I don't understand him, but I'll give into't if I can—— [Applying to Fernando.] I was loath to discover it, but the best estates may want mony sometimes: you shall have what security——

[*Jaqueline pins a letter to Fernando's coat behind.*]

Fern. I am for a mortgage, or nothing—— what a pox do you mean, gathering about me so? have you a design upon my person?

Fred. Fie, fie, Sir; well, you minded what I said?

Fern. Minded what you said! I thank you, I had more occasion to mind what you did: for aught I know I may be robb'd—— [Fernando searching his pockets.]

Jaq. Of your daughter, in good time. [Aside.]

Fern. My pockets may be pickt.

Jaq. Of a short pipe, and iron tobacco-box.

Fern. Very well, Sir, this trick won't take.

Jaq. Yes, but it will, Sir.

Fern.

The Fatal Marriage;

Fern. What then, you design'd to abuse me, to make me your property, your go-between? ha? what shall I do for you? have you no commendation-token of your affection, or so, to my wife, nor daughter? what, you have a letter; I know. I shall certainly deliver it.

Jaq. That will be kind, indeed, when my master sends one along with you.

Fern. At any time, at any time.

Fred. I'm glad I know the way.

Fern. O, you can't miss it by me: you can't find such another for your purpose.

Jaq. By my troth, I think not, Sir; ha, ha, ha.

Fern. Do you laugh at your good fortune already?

Jaq. I beg your pardon, Sir, but I must laugh.

Fern. Do, do, try with the silly gentleman, your master, whether you can laugh me out of my daughter, or no.

[Exit.]

Jaq. I think I have bid fair for't.

Fred. 'Twas pretty well towards it, to make him carry the letter himself.

Jaq. There's no danger of its miscarrying; the whole Family is in a conspiracy against him; and whoever gets it, will deliver it to *Victoria*.

Fred. I know *Fabian* will do any thing that's mischievous to assist me: go home, and desire him to stay for me: behave your self handsomely in this business, and you shall be a gentleman in earnest. Who's here? *Villeroy* and *Carlos*: here, here *Jaqueline*.

[Whispers.]

Enter Villeroy and Carlos.

Car. This constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it wou'd establish me with *Isabella*——

Car. Follow her, follow her: *Troy* town was won at last.

Vil. I have follow'd her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place, and for aught you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Val.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 7

Val. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making, than her's : and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has giv'n me.

Car. That I can't tell : the sex is very various : there are no certain measures to be prescrib'd, or follow'd, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt 'em in the weakest part : press 'em but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once ; and sometimes when we least expect it.

Vil. I shall be glad to find it so.

Car. You will find it so. Every place is to be taken, that is not to be reliev'd : she must comply.

Vil. I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your interest, and I thank you. [*Exit.*]

Car. Be sure of me to help the marriage forward. Why so, *Frederick*, am not I a very honest fellow, to endeavour to provide a good husband for my elder brother's widow ?

Fred. A very kind relation indeed : you'll give your consent to the match, where you are to have the benefit of the bargain.

Car. Tho' I have taken care to root her out of our family, I wou'd transplant her into *Villeroy's*.

Fred. That has a face of good nature ; but it squints with both eyes upon your own interest.

Car. That trick I learn'd in the schools, in your company, when I was a younger brother, and design'd for the church.

Fred. The church is a very good school : there are wise men and fools of every foundation : but there are lessons for every learner, doctrines for all disciples, and calculated to all capacities, to thrive or starve by, as they are able to digest 'em. The church will teach us to rise in this world, as well as in the next, if we have but grace to follow her example.

Car. I think I have taken care to improve the principle, I receiv'd from her. What did they turn me into a
trade

trade for, but to thrive by the mystery? and cheating is the mystery in all the professions I know of.

Fred. I have a great deal of news for you, about *Fernando* and his family; the wife and daughter are in distress, we must have mercy on 'em. When you have secur'd the main matter of *Villeroy*, and *Isabella*; *Julia* desires to fall under your consideration.

Car. I'm something busie at present; but I'll take care of her. *[Exeunt.]*

S C E N E *Fernando's House.*

Enter Julia and Victoria.

Jul. Here's your father behind us.

Vict. I hope the old eves-dropper has not over-heard me.

Enter Fernando, with the note pinn'd to his coat.

Fern. Who's that dares talk of love in my house? it shall be treason to mention it.

Jul. Your own jealous suspicion; here's nothing of love in this house to be talk'd of.

Fern. My own jealous suspicion! it may be so; however, I shall take an occasion to search my house, from the garret to the cellar; and if I do find any love in it, or any thing towards, to encourage it——

Vict. In the cellar, Sir! what shou'd you find there? cold meat, and small-beer, are no great Provocatives; Won't you allow us to eat and drink, father?

Fern. To eat and drink, father! thou art always cramming, by thy good-will: that jade's gut wou'd ruin a little Fortune; wou'd any, but I, were obliged to provide for it. Let me see, I don't know but in my absence you may have let in some rascal or another, and hid him——

Jul. Why don't you look under the table?

Fern. There's something going forward against me, I know, gentlewomen, by your always being together: come, come, what's the contrivance? let me know your design, I'll tell you whether 'twill prosper, or no.

Jul.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 9

Jul. In short, husband, I must tell you, your jealousy has quite tir'd me, and I can live no longer under your tyrannical government.

Fern. Very well; mine is a tyrannical government! and why, I pray? because it refuses you the privilege of making me a cuckold: a pretty privilege truly! and you will plead it as often as you can, no doubt on't: But I shall watch you. *[Victoria spies the letter.*

Vict. Hey day! what merry company has my father been in?

Fern. Why, do you find me in so merry an humour, Mistress?

Vict. In a humour to entertain us, I see, Sir. Some body has play'd the rogue with him. *[Aside.]* I'll try to read it——

Fern. The spirit of rebellion has been among you in my absence, to persuade you to resist my lawful authority: But whether that spirit appear'd in the simple shape of a letter only, or in the more lewd limbs of a lover, you know best——

Jul. I know nothing. *[Turning from him.*

Fern. Look you wife, if there is a necessity for doing it, do it the cheapest way: your expresses, your letter-carriers, will cost mony: ah! wou'd I cou'd light upon one of those letter-carriers, I wou'd so pay 'em.

Vict. 'Tis directed to me——I had almost spoil'd all. *[Takes the letter off.*

Fern. What is that wench doing behind me there? no good I warrant her.

Vict. Nothing, Sir, but some fool or other has been chalking you upon the back. *[Rubs him.*

Fern. O! 'twas that rogue *Frederick's* man: I felt him indeed fumbling about me when his master whisper'd me: but I shall take an occasion to score him over the coxcomb, when I see him again.

Vict. Did he send it, father?

Fern. send what, daughter! wou'd you have had him sent any thing? I could do no more, than offer my service: he did not like the conveyance, I suppose; and so you are disappointed.

The Fatal Marriage;

Vict. Not I indeed, father, I'm not disappointed; I have as much as I expected, or desir'd.

Fern. As much as you expected, or desir'd!

Vict. What have I to do with him?

Fern. Ah! gypsie! you don't know what you have to do with him? nor you don't desire to be instructed? but if you are ignorant, here's a woman of experience: your mother can inform you, she has something to do with him, if you han't. Get you gone to your several chambers, go. I'll bring you news from your fellows: rely upon me for your intelligence; I'll do your business, I warrant you.

[*Thrusts 'em in before him.*]

S C E N E *the Street.*

Villeroy, with Isabella and her little son.

Isa. Why do you follow me? you know, I am
A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd
Ever to make return; I own you've been
More than a brother to me, been my friend;
And at a time, when friends are found no more;
A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be
Always your friend.

Isa. I have known, and found you
Truly my friend; and wou'd I cou'd be yours:
But the unfortunate cannot be friends:
Fate watches the first motion of the soul,
To disappoint our wishes; if we pray
For blessings, they prove curses in the end,
To ruin all about us. Pray be gone,
Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!
There's none for me, without you: riches, name,
Health, fame, distinction, place, and quality,
Are the incumbrances of groaning life,
To make it but more tedious, without you;
What serve the goods of fortune for? to raise
My hopes, that you at last will share 'em with me.
Long life it self, the universal prayer,

And

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.*

11

And heav'n's reward of well-deservers here,
Wou'd prove a plague to me ; to see you always,
And never see you mine ! still to desire,
And never to enjoy !

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have serv'd
A seven years bondage——do I call it bondage,
When I can never wish to be redeem'd ?
No, let me rather linger out a life
Of expectation, that you may be mine ;
Than be restor'd to the indifference
Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain.
I've lost my self, and never wou'd be found,
But in these arms.

Isa. O, I have heard all this !

——But must no more—the charmer is no more.
My bury'd husband rises in the face
Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay :
Can'st thou forgive me, child ?

Child. Why, have you done a fault ? you cry as if you
had : indeed now, I have done nothing to offend you :
but if you kiss me, and look so very sad upon me, I shall
cry too.

Isa. My little angel, no, you must not cry ;
Sorrow will overtake thy steps too soon ;
I shou'd not hasten it.

Vil. What can I say !
The arguments that make against my hopes
Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more ;
Those pious tears you hourly throw away
Upon the grave, have all their quick'ning charms,
And more engage my love, to make you mine.
When yet a virgin, free, and indispos'd,
I lov'd, but saw you only with my eyes ;
I could not reach the beauties of your soul :
I have since liv'd in contemplation,
And long experience of your growing goodness :
What then was passion, is my judgment now,
Thro' all the several changes of your life,
Confirm'd, and settled in adoring you.

The Fatal Marriage ;

Isa. Nay, then I must be gone : if you're my friend ;
 If you regard my little interest,
 No more of this ; you see, I grant you all
 That friendship will allow : be still my friend ;
 That's all I can receive, or have to give.
 I'm going to my father : he needs not an excuse
 To use me ill ; pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you wou'd have me :
 The creature of your power, and must obey,
 In every thing obey you. I am going :
 But all good fortune go along with you.

[Exit.

Isa. I shall need all your wishes—— [Knocks.

Lockt ! and fast !

Where is the charity that us'd to stand,
 In our forefathers hospitable days,
 At great mens doors, ready for our wants,
 Like the good angel of the family,
 With open arms taking the needy in,
 To feed and clothe, to comfort, and relieve 'em ?
 Now ev'n their gates are shut against the poor.

[She knocks again.

Enter Sampson to her.

Sam. Well, what's to do now, I trow ? you knock as
 loud, as if you were invited ; and that's more than I
 hear of : but I can tell you, you may look twice about
 you for a welcome in a great man's family, before you
 find it ; unless you bring it along with you.

Isa. I hope, I bring my welcome along with me. Is
 your lord at home ?

Sam. My lord at home !

Isa. Count *Baldwin* lives here still ?

Sam. Ay, ay, Count *Baldwin* does live here : and I am
 his porter : but what's that to the purpose, good wo-
 man, of my lord's being at home ? If you had enquir'd
 for Mrs. *Comfit*, the house keeper, or had the good for-
 tune to be acquainted with the butler, you might have
 what you came for ; and I cou'd make you an answer :
 but for my lord's being at home to every idle body that
 enquires for him.——

Isa. Why, don't you know me, friend ?

Sam.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 13

Sam. Not I, not I, mistress; I may have seen you before, or so: but men of employment must forget their acquaintance; especially such as we are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door, nurse enters having over-heard him*

Nurse. Handsomer words would become you, and mend your manners, *Sampson*; do you know who you prate to?

Isa. I'm glad you know me, nurse.

Nurse. Marry, heav'n forbid Madam, that I should ever forget you, or my little jewel. — [*Isabella goes in with her child.*] Now my blessing go along with you, where-ever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie, *Sampson*, how could'st thou be such a *Saracen*? A *Turk* would have been a better christian, than to have done so barbarously by so good a lady.

Sam. Why look you, nurse, I know you of old: by your good will you would have a finger in every bodies pie, but mark the end on't; if I am called to account about it, I know what I have to say.

Nurse. Marry come up here; say your pleasure, and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow, and poor child, the comfort of seeing him? she does not trouble him so often.

Sam. Not that I am against it, nurse; but we are but servants, you know: we must have no likings, but our lord's; and must do as we are ordered.

Nurse. Nay, that's true, *Sampson*.

Sam. Besides, what I did was all for the best: I have no ill will to the young lady, as a body may say, upon my own account; only that I hear she is poor; and indeed, I naturally hate your decay'd gentry: they expect as much waiting upon as when they had money in their pockets, and were able to consider us for the trouble.

Nurse. Why, that is a grievance indeed in great families; where the gifts at good times are better than the wages: it would do well to be reform'd.

Sam. But what is the business, nurse? you have been in the family, before I came into the world: what's the reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so good
a re-

a report in every body's mouth, is so little set by, by my lord?

Nurse. Why, I'll tell you, *Sampson*; more nor less; I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, without adding or diminishing.

Sam. Ay, marry, nurse.

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, *Biron* by name, the son of his bosom, and the son that he would have lov'd best, if he had as many as king *Pyramus* of *Troy*.

Sam. How! king *Pyramus* of *Troy*! why how many had he?

Nurse. Why the ballet sings he had fifty sons: but no matter for that. This *Biron*, as I was saying, was a lovely sweet gentleman, and indeed, no body could blame his father for loving him: he was a son for the king of *Spain*; God bless him; for I was his nurse. But now I come to the point, *Sampson*; this *Biron*, without asking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this *Isabella*.

Sam. How wilfully! he should have had her consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, wilfully marries her; and which was worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with him. They say they had the church's forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his father's.

Sam. Why in good troth, these nunneries, I see no good they do. I think the young lady was in the right, to run away from a nunnery: and I think our young master was not in the wrong, but in marrying without a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, *Sampson*: Upon this, my old lord would never see him; disinherited him; took his younger brother *Carlos* into favour, whom he never car'd for before; and at last forc'd *Biron* to go to the siege of *Candy*, where he was kill'd.

Sam. A-lack-a-day, poor gentleman.

Nurse.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 15

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

Sam. Alas, alas, poor lady, she has suffer'd for't: she has liv'd a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while indeed for a young woman,
Sampson.

Sam. Gad so, here they come, I won't venture to be seen.

Enter Count Baldwin, followed by Isabella and her child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you,
Misguided, and abus'd you: there's your way——
I can afford to shew you out again.

What could you expect from me?

Isa. O, I have nothing to expect on earth!
But misery is very apt to talk:
I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say?
Is there in eloquence, can there be in words
A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,
A reparation of the injuries,
The great calamities, that you have brought
On me, and mine? you have destroy'd those hopes
I fondly rais'd, through my declining life,
To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone my self too.

C. Bald. Speak again:
Say still you are undone, and I will hear you,
With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleas'd—— for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and heav'n has
heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs
Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,
Which you have dug for me, without the thought,
The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched——when I lost
My husband——

C. Bald.

C. Bald. Would he had never been ;
Or never had been yours.

Isa. I then believ'd

The measure of my sorrow then was full :
But every moment of my growing days
Makes room for woes, and adds 'em to the sum.
I lost with *Biron* all the joys of life :
But now its last supporting means are gone :
All the kind helps that heav'n in pity rais'd,
In charitable pity to our wants,
At last have left us : now bereft of all,
But this last trial of a cruel father,
To save us both from sinking. O my child !
Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart :
Let the resemblance of a once-lov'd son
Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,
And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.
O, if you ever hope to be forgiven,
As you will need to be forgiven too,
Forget our faults, that heav'n may pardon yours.

C. Bald. How dare you mention heav'n ! call to mind
Your perjur'd vows ; your plighted, broken faith
To heav'n, and all things holy : were you not
Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,
The sacred habit on, profess and sworn
A votary for ever ? can you think
The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,
Is thunder-proof ?

Isa. There, there began my woes.
Let women all take warning of my fate ;
Never resolve, or think they can be safe,
Within the reach and tongue of tempting men.
O ! had I never seen my *Biron's* face,
Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,
But still continu'd innocent ; and free
Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r
To reconcile, and make me try again.

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy, your graceless
thoughts,
Debauch'd and reconcil'd you to the world :
He had no hand to bring you back again,

But

But what you gave him. *Circe*, you prevail'd
Upon his honest mind, transforming him
From virtue, and himself, into what shapes
You had occasion for ; and what he did
Was first inspir'd by you. A cloyster was
Too narrow for the work you had in hand :
Your business was more general ; the whole world
To be the scene : therefore you spread your charms
To catch his soul, to be the instrument,
The wicked instrument of your curs'd flight.
Not that you valu'd him : for any one,
Who could have serv'd that turn, had been as welcome.

Isa. O ! I have sins to heav'n, but none to him.

C. Bald. Had my wretched son
Marry'd a beggar's bastard ; taken her
Out of her rags, and made her of my blood :
The mischief might have ceas'd, and ended there
But bringing you into a family,
Entails a curse upon the name, and house,
That takes you in : the only part of me
That did receive you, perish'd for his crime.
'Tis a defiance to offended heav'n,
Barely to pity you : your sins pursue you :
The heaviest judgments that can fall upon you,
Are your just lot, and but prepare your doom :
Expect 'em, and despair——Sirrah, rogue,
How durst thou disobey me ! [*To the porter.*

Isa. Not for my self——for I am past the hopes
Of being heard——but for this innocent——
And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child :
But being yours——

Isa. Look on him as your son's ;
And let his part in him answer for mine.
O save, defend him, save him from the wrongs
That fall upon the poor.

C. Bald. It touches me——
And I will save him——but to keep him safe ;
Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me!

No, we must never part : 'tis the last hold
Of comfort I have left, and when he fails
All goes along with him : O ! could you be
The tyrant to divorce life from my life ?
I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread
From door to door, to feed his daily wants,
Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him with
your prayer.

You, rascal, slave ; what do I keep you for ?
How came this woman in ?

Sam. Why indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell her
before, my thoughts upon the matter——

C. Bald. Did you so, Sir ? now then tell her mine :
Tell her I sent you to her. [*Thrusts him towards her.*
There's one more to provide for.

Sam. Good my lord, what I did was in perfect obe-
dience to the old nurse there : I told her what it would
come to.

C. Bald. What ! this was a plot upon me. Mumper,
you, were you in the conspiracy ? be gone, go all toge-
ther ; I have provided you an equipage, now set up
when you please. She's old enough to do you service : I
have none for her. The wide world lies before you : be
gone, take any road, but this, to beg or starve in : I shall
be glad to hear of you : but never see me more.

[*He drives 'em off before him.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Villeroy and Carlos.

Car. **T**HE part I act in your interest, goes against the grain of my good nature and conscience: But since 'tis necessary to your service, and will be my sister's advantage in the end, I'm better reconcil'd to it.

Vil. My interest!

O never think I can intend to raise
An Interest from *Isabella's* wrongs.
Your father may have interested ends,
In her undoing: but my heart has none.
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why so I mean.

These hardships that my father lays upon her,
I'm sorry for; and wish I could prevent:
But he will have his way.

Since there was nothing to be hop'd from her prosperity, the change of her fortune may alter the condition of her thoughts, and make at last for you,

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love according to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

Car. Since you are not accessary to the injustice, you may be persuaded to take the advantage of other peoples crimes.

Vil. I must despise all these advantages
That indirectly can advance my love.
No, tho' I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes:
I'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason, but consenting love.
O! let me never have it to remember;

The Fatal Marriage;

I cou'd betray her, coldly to comply :
 When a clear, generous choice bestows her on me,
 I know to value the unequal'd gift :
 I wou'd not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way ; remember, what I offer'd came from a friend.

Vil. I understand it so. I'll serve her for her self, without the thought of a reward. [Exit.

Car. Agree that point between you. If you marry any way, you do my business.

Enter Frederick and Jaqueline to him.

Fred. Well, all goes well, I hope.

Car. As I cou'd wish. I can't stay with you : I must be near, if occasion be, to lend a helping hand : When this marriage is over, I design to come in for a snak of *Fernando's* family. [Exit.

Fred. The more the merrier, his wife says. I hope to dispose of the daughter my self.

Jaq. You men of intrigue are commonly look'd upon to be the idle part of mankind, that have nothing to do : now I am of a contrary opinion——

Fred. Why so, *Jaqueline* ?

Jaq. Because a right good whoremaster is never at the end of his business.

Enter Fabian in a Friar's Habit.

Fred. How ! *Fabian* turn'd friar !

Fab. As you see, *Frederick* ; you will all come to a serious sense of your sins, one time or other, as I have done. I have had a good father, and I have been an ungracious boy to him : that's the truth on't. Therefore to make him what satisfaction I can, for my past faults, I have taken this habit, with an intention to pray for him——

Fred. Why, thou art not mad, *Fabian* ?

Fab. Not mad of a monastery, I assure you. I am never the nearer being a saint, for putting on the habit of piety ! the profession and the practice of it are two things in the schools ; and wise men distinguish 'em into several interests. In short, I have told our honest abbot the whole history of my father's jealousy, covetousness,
and

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 21

and hard-heartedness to his wife and children : he, good man, making it a point of conscience to contribute as much as he can to a work of charity, has given me leave to put on this habit, for the carrying on the method of his cure.

Fred. But what do you propose by this ?

Fab. Why, I propose that every body shall be the better for it, but my father. For, upon the credit of this my reformation, believing, from my cloathing, that I shall have no more occasion for the transitory things of this world, his pocket will plead for me, and the old fellow take me into favour again.

Fred. That's something indeed.

Fab. Then, in the first place, if you miscarry to night in your design upon my sister, I shall be able to deliver a letter, and bring it about another time.

Fred. Very well.

Fab. Secondly, I intend to put the means honestly into my mothers hands, to make my father a cuckold, if she pleases.

Jaq. These are very good reasons indeed, Sir.

Fab. Besides these advantages to the publick, I have a private reason of my own, to be reveng'd upon the person of the old gentleman. I must not discover too much of my contrivance, for fear of lessening the pleasure in bringing it about — I shall have occasion of some witty rogue, that can be mischievous, when there's no danger : I think that's pretty near your character, *Jaqueline*.

Jaq. O, Sir, you do me too much honour.

Fab. Can't you spare him a little ?

Fred. Not well to-night : to-morrow —

Fab. Will do my business. I have one part of my farce, the friars will scruple a little : *Jaqueline* must act that : The whole fraternity are concern'd in my plot, I assure you.

Jaq. I'm glad to hear that, Sir; I love a plot where the the clergy's concern'd : they will alway be sure of the benefit, without the danger of the beating : I am mainly of their principles.

Fab.

Fab. I am something in haste at present :
To-morrow you shall know more.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E *Isabella's Horse.*

Enter Isabella and Nurse, Isabella's little Son at play upon the floor.

Isa. Sooner, or later all things pass away,
And are no more : the begger and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end :
Tho' they appear of different natures now ;
Not of the same day's work of providence ;
They meet at last ; the reconciling grave
Swallows distinction first, that made us foes,
Then all alike lie down in peace together.
When will that hour of peace arrive for me !
In heav'n I shall find it——not in heav'n,
If my old tyrant father can dispose
Of things above——but, there, his interest
May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
As much as I do here.

[*Weeping.*

Nurse. Good madam, be comforted.

Isa. Do I deserve to be this out-cast wretch ?
Abandon'd thus, and lost ? but 'tis my lot,
The will of heav'n, and I must not complain :
I wonnot for my self : let me bear all
The violence of your wrath ; but spare my child :
Let not my sins be visited on him :
They are ; they must ; a general ruin falls
On every thing about me : thou art lost,
Poor nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Cou'd I forget
What I have been, I might the better bear
What I am destin'd to : I'm not the first
That have been wretched : but to think how much
I have been happier !——wild hurrying thoughts
Start every way from my distracted soul,
To find out hope, and only meet despair.
What answer have I ?

Enter

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 23

Enter Sampson.

Sam. Why truly very little to the purpose : like a Jew as he is, he says you have had more already, than the jewels are worth : he wishes you wou'd rather think of redeeming 'em, than expect any more money upon 'em.

Isa. 'Tis very well—— [*Exit Sampson.*]

So : poverty at home, and debts abroad !

My present fortune bad ; my hopes yet worse !

What will become of me !——

This ring is all I've left of value now :

'Twas given me by my husband : his first gift

Upon our marriage : I have always kept it,

With my best care, the treasure next my life :

And now but part with it, to support life :

Which only can be dearer. Take it nurse,

'Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time ;

Provide us bread ; and bring a short reprieve,

To put off the bad day of beggary,

That will come on too soon. Take care of it :

Manage it, as the last remaining friend,

That would relieve us. [*Exit nurse.*] heav'n can only tell

Where we shall find another——my dear boy !

The labour, of his birth was lighter to me

Than of my fondness now ; my fears for him

Are more, than in that hour of hovering death,

They cou'd be for my self——he minds me not.

His little sports have taken up his thoughts :

O may they never feel the pangs of mine.

Thinking will make me mad : why must I think,

When no thought brings me comfort ?

Nurse returns.

Nurse. O madam ! you are utterly ruin'd, and undone, your creditors of all kinds are come in upon you : they have muster'd up a regiment of rogues that are come to plunder your house, and seize upon all you have in the world, they are below : what will you do, madam ?

Isa. Do ! nothing, no, for I am born to suffer.

Enter Carlos to her.

Car. O sister ! can I call you by that name,
And be the son of this inhuman man,

Inve-

Inveterate to your ruin ? do not think
 I am a-kin to his barbarity :
 I must abhor my father's usage of you :
 And from my bleeding honest heart, must pity,
 Pity your lost condition. Can you think
 Of any way that I may serve you in ?
 But what enrages most my sense of grief,
 My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
 Fore-knowing well the storm that was to fall,
 Has order'd me, not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity ; my poor husband fell
 For disobeying him : do not you stay
 To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something—— [Exit.

Isa. Let my fate
 Determine for me ; I shall be prepar'd.
 The worst that can befall me, is to die :
 When once it comes to that it matters not
 Which way 'tis brought about : whether I starve,
 Or hang, or drown, the end is still the same ;
 Plagues, poison, famine, are but several names
 Of the same thing, and all conclude in death.
 ——But sudden death ! O for a sudden death,
 To cheat my persecutors of their hopes,
 Th' expected pleasure of beholding me
 Long in my pains, ling'ring in misery.
 It wonnot be ; that is deny'd me too.
 Hark, they're coming ; let the torrent roar :
 It can but overwhelm me in its fall ;
 And life and death are now alike to me.

[*Exeunt, the nurse leading the child.*

SCENE opens, and shews Carlos and Vil-
 leroy with the Officers.

Vil. No farther violence——
 The debt in all is but four thousand crowns ;
 Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
 My fortune very well can answer it.
 You have my word for this : I'll see you paid.

Off.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 25

Off. That's as much as we can desire: so we have the Money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all's well. —

Enter Isabella, and nurse with the child.

And now my sister comes to crown the work. [*Aside.*

Isa. Where are these rav'ning blood-hounds, that In a full cry, gaping to swallow me? (*pursue*

I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd:

Say, which way are you to dispose of me?

To dungeons, darkness, death!

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience!

Off. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office; debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all. [*Distractedly.*

Off. While there is law to be had, people will have their own.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be gone.

To morrow certainly — [*Exeunt officers.*

Isa. What of to morrow?

Am I then the sport,

The game of fortune, and her laughing fools?

The common spectacle, to be expos'd

From day to day, and baited for the mirth

Of the lewd rabble? must I be reserv'd

For fresh afflictions?

Vil. For long happiness
Of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.

The load grows light, when we resolve to bear:

I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray be calm,
And know your friends.

Isa. My friends! have I a friend?

Car. A faithful friend; in your extreamest need
Villeroy came in to save you —

Isa. Save me! how?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way? for what?

Vil. Let me be understood,
 And then condemn me : you have giv'n me leave
 To be your friend ; and in that only name,
 I now appear before you. I could wish,
 There had been no occasion of a friend ;
 Because I know you shy to be oblig'd ;
 And still more loath to be oblig'd by me.

Isa. 'T was that I would avoid——

[*Aside.*

Vil. I'm most unhappy, that my services
 Can be suspected, to design upon you ;
 I have no farther ends than to redeem you
 From fortune's wrongs ; to shew my self at last,
 What I have long profess'd to be, your friend :
 Allow me that ; and to convince you more,
 That I intend only your interest,
 Forgive what I have done, and in amends
 (If that can make you any, that can please you)
 I'll tear my self for ever from my hopes ;
 Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,
 That has so long broke out to trouble you :
 And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me——

[*Aside.*

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you
 Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can
 To keep away ; and never see you more.

Car. You must not go.

Vil. Could *Isabella* speak
 Those few short words, I should be rooted here :
 And never move but upon her commands.

Car. Speak to him, sister, do not throw away
 A fortune that invites you to be happy.
 In your extremity he begs your love ;
 And has deserv'd it nobly. Think upon
 Your lost condition, helpless and alone.
 Tho' now you have a friend, the time must come
 That you will want one ; him you may secure
 To be a friend, a father, husband to you.

Isa. A husband !

Car. You have discharg'd your duty to the dead,
 And to the living ; 'tis a wilfulness

Not

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 27

Not to give way to your necessities.
That force you to this marriage.

Nurse. What must become of this poor innocence?

[*To the Child.*]

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,
And rear him up to virtue. you must bear
The future blame, and answer to the world,
When you refuse the easie honest means
Of taking care of him.

Nurse. Of him, and me,
And every one, that must depend upon you :
Unless you please now to provide for us,
We must all perish.

Car. Nor would I press you——

Isa. Do not think I need
Your reasons, to confirm my gratitude.
I have a soul that's thoroughly sensible,
Of your great worth, and busie to contrive, [To Vil.
If possible, to make you a return.

Vil. O! easily possible!

Isa. It cannot be your way : my pleasures are
Bury'd, and cold in my dead husband's grave.
And I should wrong the truth, my self, and you,
To say that I can ever love again.
I owe this declaration to my self :
But as a proof that I owe all to you,
If after what I've said, you can resolve
To think me worth your love——where am I going ?
You cannot think it ; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible!

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I grant.
I am so much oblig'd, that to consent
Wou'd want a name to recommend the gift.
'Twould shew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,
Designing, mercenary ; and I know
You would not wish to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought ! where is the price that can pretend
To bargain for you ? not in fortune's power.
The joys of heav'n, and love, must be bestow'd :
They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd.

The Fatal Marriage;

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time so fit for me.

[*Following her.*]

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now ;
That you may grant : you are above
The little forms, which circumscribe your sex.
We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit
To get the better of me, and you shall ;
Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all,
My hand, and wou'd I had a heart to give :
But if it ever can return again,
'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. O extasie of joy !

Leave that to me. If all my services,
If prosperous days, and kind indulging nights,
If all that man can fondly say, or do,
Can beget love, love shall be born again.
O *Carlos* ! now my friend, and brother too.
And nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.

Send for the Priest—— [Nurse goes out in haste.]

This night you must be mine.
Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word
Never to press me to put off these weeds,
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,
You shall command me.

Vil. Witness heav'n and earth
Against my soul, when I do any thing
To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness ?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next my *Isabella*,
Be near my heart : I am for ever yours.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 29

SCENE *the Street before Fernando's House.*

Enter Frederick and Jaqueline, with a dark-lantern, and a ladder of ropes.

Fred. Well ! this is the time ; and that's the window.

Jaq. And here is a ladder to put her in mind of her fortune.

Fred. How's that, sirrah ?

Jaq. Why, lord Sir, if the gentlewoman be mad enough to run away from her father, upon your account, she'll carry the frolick a little farther, in a fortnight, and hang her self upon her own.

Fred. Why, you rogue, I'm in love with her.

Jaq. I am but your poor servant, Sir, and if you command me to believe you, 'tis another thing. But I know what your love commonly ends in——

Fred. In what, Sir ?

Jaq. In a week, Sir ; but that's her business, and not mine ; unless the spirit of her revenge rises upon the folly of her pride, and frightens her into the consideration of your humble servant *Jaqueline*.

Fred. O ! you are witty, Sir ! the window opens.

[Victoria above, a night-gown over her mans cloaths.

Vict. I heard a noise ! I'll listen.

Fred. *Victoria !*——

Vict. Here am I, expecting the good hour, boy or girl, chuse you whether, so we once but come together.

Jaq. Here's your deliverance in a halter, madam, a ladder of ropes for you. *[Thrown up to her.*

Vict. I had rather have it in a halter, than stay where I am : give it me.

Fred. Be sure you fasten it above.

Vict. Any thing to get loose below.

Jaq. O the discretion of a girl ! she will be a slave to any thing that has not a title to make her one. If my master does commit matrimony, which he is not much addicted to, 'tis but changing a father for a husband ; removing from one prison to another ; but that has appearance

ance of liberty for the time, tho' it ends in a worse confinement at last.

Vict. Well ! the ladder that is to convey me is ready ; but before I part with this world 'twould be but reasonable to have a little consolation to encourage my journey to the next. What am I to trust to when I come there ?

Jaq. My master, madam, my master ; what should you trust to ? you can't trust an honefter gentleman—— who, to my knowledge, will more infallibly break his word with you. [*Aside.*

Fred. What should you trust to, but your self, child ? rely upon your beauty : 'twere a disparagement of that, to talk of conditions, when you are certain of making your own terms.

Vict. Nay, now is my time indeed, and 'twill be my own fault if I don't : I shall shift, as my neighbours daughters have done before me if I am left to the wide world. but *Frederick*, as to your particular.

Fred. Why, my particular is at your service, and pray come down and be satisfied ; lord, here's such ado to persuade a woman to her liberty.

Vict. I'm answer'd, I'm answer'd, and coming down as fast as I can : any thing to get rid of this father.

Fernando enters to her arm'd, and turns her away from the window.

Fern. Say you so, gentlewoman ?

Vict. Undone, and ruin'd ! what shall I do !

Fern. I'll tell you what you shall do ; get you in, huffy, go. —— now will I personate this hopeful young jade, And by that means discover the whole intrigue.

Jaq. What's that !

Fred. What's what ? where ?

Jaq. There's certainly a noise at the window above. I'll turn the blind side of my lanthorn, for fear of being discovered.

Fred. You blockhead, the noise was in the street——

Victoria.——

[*Calling her.*

Fern. Ay, ay.

Fred. Where are you, my dear ?

Fern.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 31

Fern. I am here, my dear.

Jaq. Are you sure you are there, madam? for my heart misgives me most plaguily about this father of yours.

Fern. Does it so, rogue enough? [*Aside.*]

Jaq. You had best make haste: old *Argus* will have an eye upon you, and then——

Fred. You'll slip your opportunity.

Fern. I'll lay hold on't——and your ears, when I come within reach of em. [*Aside.*]

Fred. Are you coming? [*Ladder.*]

Fern. Now, speak softly. [*Fernando goes down the*

Fred. Look you to the ladder: I'll call the chair to carry her off. [*Exit.*]

Jaq. I'll lead you to my master, madam: pray give me your hand.

Fern. There 'tis for you—— [*Strikes him.*]

Jaq. By my troth, and so 'tis; but not quite so soft, as might be expected from a lady: sure you, or I, are mistaken, madam. [*looks upon him with his lanthorn.*]
Mercy upon me! what do I see?

Fern. Why, what do you see? you see the party you expected to see; don't you, sirrah?

Jaq. The devil, the devil, the devil.

[*Crying out, and running about.*]

Fern. You lye, you lye like a rogue, I am none of the devil, but I will make a devil of you before I have done with you: I'll disappoint you of a halter, and send you a nearer way than you thought of. Have at you.

[*Presenting a blunderbuss at him, Jaqueline falls, Frederick runs and disarms Fernando.*]

Fred. Deliver us from a blunderbuss.

Jaq. O lord, Sir, a thousand thanks to you: I am not perfectly satisfied whether he has kill'd me, or no: but if I am dead, I shall be glad to hear that old rogue was hang'd for me.

Fred. Who are you that wou'd murther my servant?

Fern. One that wou'd do as much for his master.

Jaq. Oh! he's the devil of a fellow: take care of him.

Fred.

The Fatal Marriage;

Fred. *Fernando* ! how came you here ?

Fern. Why, your mistress, and my damn'd daughter, not being quite ready to run away with you, desir'd me to make her excuse, and come down in her room to receive you.

Jaq. My reception was a little extraordinary : pox take you.

Fern. I beg your pardon gentlemen, I am a little unprovided at present to entertain you ; but my servants are up in the house, I'll get them together as fast as I can, and then you shall be sure of a welcome.

Fred. Unlucky disappointment !

Fern. No, no, no disappointment in the world : stay but a little, I'll bring my daughter myself to you ; you shan't be disappointed. [*Victoria in mans cloaths opens the door, comes forward and meets Fernando.*] how's this ! my door open ! and a man come out of my house ! who are you ? what wou'd you have ? thieves ! thieves ! lay hold upon him ; I charge you in the king's name to secure him——thieves, thieves—— [*Calling out.*

Vict. As you are gentlemen protect me ; I am no thief.

Fred. How do we know that, friend ? 'tis very suspicious.——

Fern. Ay, ay, they are your accomplices——I shall be with you——thieves, thieves. [*Goes in.*

Vict. If you don't find me worth your protection, when you know me, do what you please with me.

Jaq. That's fair enough, Sir ; we had best draw off in time, the house will rise upon us.

Fred. A pox on this unlucky adventure. Poor *Victoria* she must pay for all. [*Exeunt.*

Fernando returns.

Fern. Fire, fire ! you'll be burnt in your beds ; will no body come to me ?——thieves, thieves.

[*Several servants run in.*

Ser. Where, where ?

Fern. How came my doors open ? where's my wife ? bid my daughter come down. I have lost——I don't know what I have lost. They may be plotters against the

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 33

the government for aught I know; run every way to apprehend 'em. [*Servants run about the stage.*

Serv. This way, this way.

[*Exeunt.*

The SCENE changes.

Enter Frederick, Victoria, and Jaqueline.

Jaq. A little of the old rogue's broad gold would have purchas'd your pardon, if you had robb'd him: I was in hopes of a snack of the plunder.

Vict. My design lay another way, I assure you.

Fred. But that we must not enquire into.

Vict. Why, faith, yes, if you please. I am so much oblig'd to you for my deliverance, I'll make nothing a secret to you.

Fred. Nay, Sir, if it be a secret——

Jaq. 'Twere not worth telling, Sir, if it were not a secret.

Vict. It is a secret, as indeed every thing ought to be, when there's a woman in the case.

Fred. Is there a woman in the case then?

Vict. A very pretty woman; but you are a man of honour.

Jaq. That he is upon my word, Sir; my master is as good at a lady's secret as you can be, and will betray it to no body—before he has discover'd it himself. [*Aside.*

Vict. And therefore I will honestly own to you, that my business was with *Victoria*, *Fernando's* daughter.

Fred. with *Victoria*!

Jaq. This fool will discover himself to his rival. [*Aside*

Fred. Does *Victoria* know of your business?

Vict. Know of my business! why, I make love to her! I have had an intrigue with her these three months: I am almost tir'd of her. I lye with her every night in her father's house, and the devil's in't if she is not acquainted with my business.

Jaq. It must be your fault, if she is not, that's certain.

Vict. Now you must know her father is jealous of every body for her, but me; there's one *Frederick* has a design upon her, she has given him some encouragement of

of late, for the sake of her liberty. I thank her, she has thought him fitter for the fortune of her husband than I should be ; she designs to marry him, good man, for her convenience ; and I am to continue upon all occasions of pleasure, as I tell you, Sir, her ladyship's humble servant.

Fred. You will have a rare time on't with this fool of a husband.

Vict. I shall manage him, I warrant you ; do you know him ?

Fred. I have seen him.

Jaq. I have the honour to know him a little too.

[*Pulling his master by the sleeve.*]

Vict. And what do you think of him ? does he promise to be a cuckold by his countenance ?

Fred. Why, faith, no, I thought not.

Jaq. But there's no faith in faces, you know, Sir.

Fred. It seems so indeed by what this gentleman has told us ; but Sir, do you know your cuckold ? this *Frederick* ?

Vict. Ay, Sir, I know him.

Fred. Hold up your lanthorn. *Jaqueline.*

[*The lanthorn held up to Frederick's face.*]

Vict. Bless me ; who are you ?

Fred. That very man, the *Frederick* you speak of, your cuckold that is to be.

Vict. Say you so, Sir, why then you are obliged to me for telling your fortune before-hand ; you may avoid it if you please ; I have given you warning.

Fred. But I must reward you for your care of me.

Jaq. 'Tis a pretty impudent fellow, and I'm sorry for him.

[*Aside.*]

Fred. Look you, Sir, if I believ'd any thing that you have said of *Victoria*, I wou'd not think you worth a beating upon her account : I wou'd leave you to your vanity, and her to the folly of throwing her self away upon such a rascal ; but I know you lye ; yet I'll use you better than you deserve——Draw——

[*Draws.*]

Vict. Not in the dark ; besides you are two to one. I scorn to recant what I said ; and to-morrow as soon as you please——

Fred.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 35

Fred. I shan't part with you so, you shall go home with me to night, that I may be sure of you in the morning.

Vict. With all my heart; you know me well enough, and when you see my face——

Fred. Pray let us see it——

[*Jaqueline holds the lanthorn to her face.*

Vict. You will believe that I am more——a——woman of honour, than to refuse a gentleman any reasonable satisfaction

[*In a soft voice.*

Fred. May I believe my eyes! *Victoria!*

Vict. Now I won't part with you, Sir; what say you? Shall I go home with you to night, that you may be sure of me in the morning?

Fred. I will be sure of thee to night, child.

Vict. No, not to night; nothing in the dark, as I told you before.

Fred. I am confounded at your escape; your manner of making it; your father's coming down upon us; your man's cloaths; and a——

Vict. Never wonder at a woman's invention: we have wit enough for our own affairs, I warrant you. In a design of pleasing our selves, you find, one way or other we bring it about.

Fred. You have play'd the rogue with me, *Victoria*, but I shall be reveng'd of you.

Vict. Why, you won't offer to marry sure, after the character you have had of me?

Fred. I have had fair warning indeed, but he must have more grace than I, who can take warning of any thing he has a mind to.

Vict. Marriage is a bold venture at the best.

Fred. But where we please our selves we venture least.

ACT

A C T III. S C E N E I.

S C E N E *Fernando's House.*

Fernando meeting Fabian in a Fryar's habit.

Fern. **H**OW now, son, what news with you? bless you, bless you——tho' I am but in an indifferent humour of blessing at present.

Fab. Sir, I come out of my duty to see you.

Fern. Why, that's well: I am lusty, as to that matter still; but your sister, like a vagrant, a vagabond Jade, is run away from me: let her alone, see who'll have the worst on't; thy estate will be the better for it by some thousands.

Fab. Alas! my estate, Sir! I have done with the things of this world.

Fern. Nay, I don't persuade you; I wou'd not go about to alter your holy resolution—but a scurvy jade! if I had known of her disobedience a little sooner, I cou'd have the better afforded to have been kinder to thee—

Fab. You have been kinder than I deserv'd, in forgiving me.

Fern. For I am afraid I was not so kind as I shou'd have been to thee——ha?

Fab. O dear Sir.

Fern. Indeed I am; there might be faults on my side; if truth wou'd out, I believe I lov'd money a little too well, did I not? ha?

Fab. I did not deserve it, Sir.

Fern. But I'll make thee amends. We old fellows seldom think of doing good for our children, till they are out of the way of receiving it. Well, and how dost thou like a religious life? ha?

Fab. Very well, Sir.

Fern. Why, very well, 'tis better than rambling up and down the town, spending thy time and mony with the prophane. When I die, I shall leave a swingeing legacy to the monastery upon thy account.

Fab.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 37

Fab. Upon your own, Sir, we shall pray for you.

Fern. No, no, I'll not put you to the trouble.

Fab. And help you out of purgatory.

Fern. Ah! my purgatory is in this world; and a young wife, my tormentor. Good son call her to me. [*Ex. Fab.* Let me see, I have lost my daughter, but then I have sav'd my money; all daughters are lost to their parents, one time or other; why then the cheapest way of getting rid of 'em, is always the best for the family. If *Frederick* has got her, and will play the honourable fool to marry her, for love, that is, without a penny of portion; he is in the way of repenting his bargain, and not I, I take it; but then I shou'd have marry'd her to my old friend *Francisco*——why, my old friend *Francisco* is luckily rid of a damn'd young wife, that would as certainly have made him a——

Enter Julia and Fabian.

Jul. A what, husband? as who? you are always bringing your filthy comparisons into the family: you put this business so often into my head, it may fall upon your own, one day.

Fern. Fie, fie, wife, I did not mean thee; that undutiful daughter of mine I was reflecting upon; bless us! I warrant you, what a penitent she will be in a little time! we shall have her come, with her looks down, and her belly up, full of the experiment, with a pitiful petition for pardon, and portion.

Jul. Not if she be wise: what woman that has but the least sense of what it is to be happy, would not prefer want, hunger, any thing to such an intolerable slavery?

Fern. Why then you are of her opinion, it seems?

Jul. Have a care of making me so.

Fern. I shall have a care of other peoples making you

Jul. Jealousie and ill usage may do much. (so.

Fern. A good opportunity may do more.

Jul. One with the other, husband.

Fern. Wou'd make you run away from your husband?
Ha?

Jul. Ay, and run to another man too; any thing, if my virtue would permit me.

Fern.

Fern. Your virtue ! ah ! when I stand to the mercy of your virtue, I'll be contented to fall by that folly : No, no, I have a trick worth two on't : I'll keep you out of the temptation, and then 'tis not much matter whether you have any virtue, or no.

Jul. Pray do, lock me up, that your neighbours may know you dare not trust me at your kinsman's wedding.

Fab. Sir, you and my mother are invited : *Villeroy* is your relation, and will take it ill if you don't go.

Fern. Yes, yes, wife, we will go——

Fab. Or I shall be disappointed.

[*Aside.*

Fern. Hanging-days are commonly holy-days : I love to see the execution of a husband : they have had their jest long enough upon me, I shall be glad to laugh in my turn. Besides, 'tis a publick wedding, is it not ?

Jul. Why, what's that to the purpose ?

Fab. 'Tis kept publickly.

Fern. Why ? so much the better ; there's less danger of you, wife : these publick entertainments seldom do any body hurt, but those that make 'em. All the young fellows I know, will be designing upon the new marry'd woman ; you must not take it ill, wife ; every one in their turn, you have had yours already. When the husband invites, 'tis a sort of a mannerly gratitude to be civil to his wife.

Fab. They say indeed, whoever dances with the bride, the husband pays the fidler.

Fern. Ay, ay, let 'em all dance with her ; if cuckolds would honestly declare themselves, their number would go near to keep 'em in countenance : I hope to see 'em so much in fashion, that no body may laugh at his neighbour.

S C E N E *Isabella's house.*

Carlos, with Frederick, and Victoria in man's cloaths.

Car. You are the strangest woman in the world, run away from your father, and then scruple to marry the man you run to !

Vict.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 39

Vict. That will admit of a scruple, Sir.

Fred. Don't you believe I love you?

Vict. O, yes, Sir, your present inclination may be good, I believe: but that present inclination, how long will it last, I beseech you?

Fred. There's a question for a lover indeed!

Vict. When that begins to tire, as every thing is the worse for the wearing, they say, how many husbandly reflections will you have upon the matter! you will find out a thousand pretty things you could have done with my portion; but not one civil thing with my person, without it: the woman, that plays the fool my way, in running from her friends, must have more than she can carry about her, to be welcome long in a place; and marriage is only for life, they say.

Fred. I gad, she's in the right on'r. [*Aside.*]

Car. What can you say to this, *Frederick*?

Vict. Nay, he can say more than I can believe, I assure you: but I won't put him to the expence of his conscience. When I see which way my brother's plot works upon my father, I shall be able to tell you more of my mind. In the mean time I have the privilege of my disguise, to be at the entertainment of this wedding.

Fred. But you'll get such a habit of wearing the breeches——

Vict. When you get me out of 'em, you must keep me out of 'em; that will be your way, I believe; not but if you care for a security, you have a pretty good one upon me.

Fred. As how pray?

Vict. Why, I have done too much with you, to do any thing with any body else; I shan't be twice run away with, I warrant you.

Fred. I dare rely upon you—— [*Exit Victoria.*]
Now, *Carlos*, every thing's to your mind.

Car. I have taken a great deal of pains to bring it about. The severity of my sister's widowhood, was the only bar to my hopes in favour of her son.

Fred. This marriage has remov'd that.

Car. And ruin'd 'em for ever with my father.

Fred.

The Fatal Marriage ;

Fred. How will you be able to thank 'em for the service they have done you ?

Car. The service pays it self: we are all pleas'd. I shou'd have visited 'em with an *Epithalamium*, to bless their endeavours ; but I have a sonnet is pretty well to the purpose. Strike up, boys——'tis not much matter now, whether my brother be alive, or no. [*Aside.*]

Enter Victoria.

Vict. No news of the bride or bridegroom yet ?

Car. We are going to summon 'em.

Vict. By this time, I suppose, they may be glad of a handsom excuse to be rid of one another.

A SONG, Set by Mr. *Purcell*, and Sung
by Mr. *Hodgson*.

I.

THE danger is over, the battel is past,
The nymph had her fears, but she ventur'd at last,
She try'd the encounter, and when it was done,
She smil'd at her folly, and own'd she had won.
By her eyes we discover the bride has been pleas'd ;
Her blushes become her, her passion is eas'd ;
She dissembles her joy, and affects to look down :
If she sighs, 'tis for sorrow 'tis ended so soon.

II.

'Appear all you virgins, both aged and young,
All you, who have carry'd that burden too long,
Who have lost precious time, and you who are losing,
Betray'd by your fears, between doubting and chusing :
Draw nearer, and learn what will settle your mind :
You'll find your selves happy, when once you are kind.
Do but wisely resolve the sweet venture to run,
You'll feel the loss little, and much to be won.

Villeroy enters to them.

Vil. Who's there ? my *Carlos* ! *Frederick* ! O my friends !
Let me embrace you : welcome, welcome all.

What

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 41

What shall I say to you, that may express
My thanks for this good-morrow ? at a time——

Car. Fred. We came to wish you joy.——

Vil. I have it sure ;

All that this life can give me ; he must be
More than a man who can be happier.
I am so much transported with the thoughts
Of what I am, I know not what I do.

My *Isabella* ! but possessing her,
Who would not lose himself ? you'll pardon me :
Oh ! there was nothing wanting to my soul,
But the kind wishes of my loving friends ;
And now I have you to rejoice with me.

Where are my servants ?

Gentlemen, this purse will tell you that I thank you.

[*To the musick.*

Where, where are you ?

[*To his servants.*

Are my friends invited ? is every thing in order ?

You cannot be too busie in your care.

Pray put on your best looks, as well as cloaths.

Gold, that does every thing, shall make you smile :

Carry an invitation in your face,

To every one you see, no matter who.

I'll double all your wages ; nothing appear

Within these walls, but plenty, mirth, and love ;

An universal face of joy, and love.

Fred. Why this is wonderful.

Vil. O when you all get wives, and such as mine,

(If such another woman can be found)

You will rave too, doat on the dear content,

And prattle in their praise, out of all bounds :

No matter what the fools of form shall say,

Let 'em believe us mad ; we'll pity them,

And their dull want of knowing how to love.

Car. If you would talk calmly, and come to particulars, we might be the better for the story.

Vil. Particulars ! how ? which way shall I try

To utter my full blifs ? 'tis in my head,

'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul :

The labour of my fancy, and too vast

A birth of joy, to be disclos'd so soon.

Imagination must devour it self.

About some twelve months hence I may begin
To speak plain sense; and then I'll tell you all.

Vict. This matrimony wou'd be a heavenly thing, if
the first night wou'd last always.

Vil. Sir, I must beg your pardon: pray forgive me,
I did not see you sooner——

A pretty gentleman——

Car. A friend of ours.

Vil. Who is he?

Vict. Sir, I am one, just upon the precipice of marrying; and come here to try whether I like the condition of my friends, before I venture on't my self.

Vil. O Sir! you can't do better:
I shall make converts of you all in time.

[*Servant gives him a letter.*]

Car. He does not know you.

Vict. I'm glad on't; 'twould lay a restraint upon me
if he did, which I have no mind to at present.

Fred. He might take the privilege of a relation, perhaps, to censure your conduct.

Vict. That is to say, you would if you durst: but when
I marry you, I'll give you leave.

Car. Does *Villeroy* know of *Fabian's* plot upon his father?

Fred. Yes; and approves of it, for the good of the family: that was the chief reason of inviting him.

Vil. Unlucky accident! my brother the arch-bishop of *Malines*, intending for *Bruxelles*, is taken desperately ill; my letter presses me to be with him to night. It must be so.

Fred. 'Tis hard indeed——

Car. To leave your bride so soon.

Vil. But having the possession of my love,
I am the better able to support
This absence, in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short.

Vil. It will seem long.

What say you to some cooling wines, or fruit,

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 43

Till the bride's dress'd?

Fred. We wait upon you.

Vil. Frederick, I hear you are a bridegroom too:
You're a bold man to marry my cousin *Victoria*,
Without her father's leave:

But we'll take pains to make up all again. [Exeunt.

Enter Sampson, and nurse.

Sam. Ay, marry nurse, here's a master indeed! he'll double our wages for us! if he comes on as fast with my lady, as he does with her servants, we are all in the way to be well pleas'd.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour; if she be in as good a one——

Sam. If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well! why don't you go back again to your old Count? you thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turn'd out of a nobleman's service.

Sam. For the future, I will never serve in a house, where the master, or mistress of it lyes single: they are out of humour with every body, when they are not pleas'd themselves. Now this going to bed together, makes every thing go well: there's mirth, and mony stirring about, when those matters go as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed a good bed-fellow, *Sampson*——

Sam. Ah nurse! a good bed-fellow is a very good thing, and goes a great way.——but, what now my lady is marry'd, I hope we shall have company come to the house: there's something always coming from one Gentleman, or other, upon those occasions, if my lady loves company.

Nurse. Add so, my master! we must not be seen. [Ex.

Enter Villeroy and Fabian.

Vil. You say 'tis innocent?

Fab. Only a sleeping draught, to make him forget some of his ill humours: when it works, he'll be thought to have tipled too much, that's all: I'll remove him with as little trouble, as possible,

Vil. Is he coming?

The Fatal Marriage ;

Fab. He's below ; I'll way-lay him with a bottle in a corner, and give him his dose before you see him.

Vil. That as you please. pray tell the company
The bride will wait upon 'em. [Fabian goes out.

Isabella.

Enter Isabella.

My *Isabella* ! O the joy of heart !
That I have leave at last to call you mine.
When I give up that title to the charms
Of any other wish, be nothing mine.
But let me look upon you ! view you well ;
This is a welcome gallantry indeed :
I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
Just at the time : dispensing with your dress
Upon our bridal-day.

Isa. black might be ominous ;
I would not bring ill luck along with me.

Vil. O ! if your melancholy thoughts could change
With shifting of your dress——time has done cures
Incredible, this way, and may again.
'Tis something that the face of heav'n appears
Darken'd, and hid so long in mourning veils :
When breaking clouds divide, they make a way
For the bright sun to smile upon the day.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,
Our marriage had not been so publick.

Vil. do not you grudge me my excess of love ;
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd :
Besides 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you ;
And lessen it in other peoples thoughts,
Busie on such occasions to enquire,
Had it been private.

Isa. I have no more to say.

Enter Carlos, Frederick, Victoria, other men and women.

Vil. Our friends too, who come in to the support
Of our bad fortune, have an honest right,
In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. We come to claim that right, to share your joy.

Fred.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 45

Fred. To wish you joy ; and find it in our selves ;
For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
A kindly comfort, into every heart
That is not envious.

Vil. He must be a friend,
Who is not envious of a happiness
So absolute as mine ; but if you are
(As I have reason to believe you are)
Concern'd for my well-being ; there's the cause :
Thank her for what I am, and what must be.

Vict. Is not this better than lying alone, madam ?

Car. You'll take my advice another time, sister.

Fred. You ladies are hard to be persuaded to please
your selves : but you know when you are well, I hope.

Car. When you are well-pleas'd he means, sister. You
are a judge, and within the degrees of comparison, ha-
ving had a husband before. [*Isa. turns away.*]

Vil. *Carlos*, what have you done ? a rising smile
Stole from her thoughts, just redning on her cheek,
And you have dash't it.

Car. I'm sorry for't.

Vil. My best friends will forgive me, when I own
I must prefer her peace to all the world.
Pray let us bury every thing that's past ;
Look forward to the kindly coming hour.
I have a prospect of sufficient joy ;
Would you had all, to entertain your hopes,
And draw you on to everlasting love.

Enter Fernando, Julia and Fabian.

Fern. Why, so, so, all goes well, I see : wish you joy,
cousin. I am an old fellow, but I must salute your
bride. [*Kisses her.*] A fine woman truly ! I have had two
or three glasses to her health already : I design to be ve-
ry merry, ha.

Vil. Why, so you shall, cousin ; fill some wine.

[*To Servants.*]

Fern. Why, that's well said ; fill some wine. But one
word with you——

Jul. I did not know you at first.

Vict.

Vict. If my father does not, I shall have the pleasure of teasing him.

Jul. Your brother has taken care that he shall know nobody.

Fern. If you had consulted me, I could have told you--

Vil. What, cousin?

Fern. Why, that there goes a great deal of pains to keep a handsom wife to ones self; remember I told you so.

Vil. Take care of your own, cousin.

Fern. Why, that's true too--*[Sees Victoria with Julia.]*
Where are you? how! what have you to do with this gentlewoman, friend?

Vict. I would have something to do with her, if you would let us alone.

Fern. 'Tis pity to disturb you indeed.

Vict. 'Gad so, Sir, I beg your pardon-----

[Bowing to Fernando.]

Fern. No harm done in the least, Sir.

Vict. You look like a civil person-----

Fern. O, a very civil person.

Vict. You may have an interest in the lady, to speak a good word for me.

Fern. Why so I may; I may speak a good word for you indeed. But for your comfort, I can tell you, she has the grace never to mind what I say to her.

Vict. Then do me the courtesie to leave us together, and I shall be able to speak for my self.

Fern. I never doubted it.

Vict. I suppose you may be her grandfather: 'tis your business, you know, to provide for your family.

Fern. And why her grandfather, pray?

Vict. Because you look to be about those years of discretion.

Fern. Come, you are an idle companion, to talk at this rate to my wife, and before my face too.

Vict. How, Sir, your wife! is she your wife, Sir?

Fern. I am her husband, Sir.

Vict. I beg your pardon again, Sir; I was in hopes----

Fern.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 47

Fern. I know you were; you were in hopes to make me a cuckold: but you are an impudent fellow for your hopes; and so get you gone about your business. Ha! what's the matter with me?

Jul. Why, husband, what's the matter?

Fern. I am so drowsie all on the sudden—— [*Yawns.*]

Vil. The glass stays for you, *Fernando*.

Fern. I'll drink no more, Wife, let us go home.

Fred. One glass to the bride, Sir.

Fern. O, are you there? you have a daughter of mine in keeping, I take it; with you joy of her. [*Yawns.*]

Fred. Your wishes will go a great way to't, Sir.

Fern. No farther; [*Yawns.*] they will go no farther I tell you. Wife, wife, let us be going, wife. Sure I am enchanted—— [*Yawns.*]

Vil. Come, come, *Fernando*, you will take your daughter into favour, I know.

Fern. Pray give me leave—— [*Yawns.*]

Car. To depart in peace. (*chair.*)

Fern. What I ought to do ----- [*Yawns and falls into a*

Viçt. We shall know when he rises.

Vil. I leave you to consider it——

Fred. Upon his pillow.

Fern. Wife, wife, come along with me.

Fab. I'll take care of my father; take no notice, but come as soon as you can to me.

[*Fabian has Fernando carry'd off in a chair.*]

Car. Now, madam, I may take care of you. [*To Julia.*]

Fred. What have we here?

Vil. Something is well meant:

Let us receive it so. Pray sit, my friends.

An Entertainment of dancing; after which a Song sent by an unknown hand, set by Mr. *Henry Purcel*, and sung by Mrs. *Ayliff*.

I.

*I sigh'd and own'd my love:
Nor did the fair my passion disapprove:*

*A soft engaging air,
 Not often apt to cause despair,
 Declar'd she gave attention to my prayer.
 She seem'd to pity my distress,
 And I expected nothing less,
 Than what her every look does now confess.*

II.

*But, oh, her change destroys
 The charming prospect of my promis'd joys :
 She's robb'd of every grace
 That argu'd pity in her face,
 And cold, forbidding frowns, supply their place.
 But while she strives to chill desire,
 Her brighter eyes such warmth inspire,
 She checks the flame, but cannot quench the fire.*

Vil. You have not minded this poor pageantry.

Isa. I minded what you said ; you are to leave me :
 I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. O could I think,
 Could I persuade my self, that your concern
 For me, or for my absence, had employ'd you——
 But you are all possess'd another way.
 I shall be jealous of this rival, grief,
 That you indulge ; it fits so near your heart,
 There is not room enough for mighty love.

[Servant whispers Vil.]

*We come. You, Carlos,
 Will act a brother's part, till my return,
 And be the guardian here. All, all I have,
 That's dear to me, I give up to your care.
 Our dinner calls upon us : would I had
 An entertainment that could speak my joy,
 And thanks to this kind company. Lead on.
 Long suffering lovers would consent to stay,
 For the reward of such a night and day.*

[Exeunt, Carlos leading the bride.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *The Monastery Burying-place, Fernando's Tomb; Jaqueline, with others, dress'd for Procession.*

Enter Fabian, with Carlos, Julia, Frederick and Victoria.

Fab. **B**E satisfied, and expect the consequence; if I don't answer your expectations, never rely upon me for a miracle again.

Jul. O! but this is carrying the jest too far; he has beaten him like a dog.

Vict. Where have you buried him?

Fab. This is his tomb.

Car. Then here lies an honest fellow, who (if his wife would have heard reason) might have been a cuckold, and consequently gone to heaven.

Jul. But now he's buried, 'tis too late, you know, to think of sending him that way.

Car. O virtue! virtue! what an enemy art thou to a woman's good inclinations!

Jul. A troublesome companion indeed, if one knew how to be honestly rid on't: can you advise me?

Car. Nay, take your own way; you are past advising, it seems; for a woman to play the hypocrite, and counterfeit virtue, when she has it not, is a very common thing——

Jul. But to play the hypocrite, the wrong way!

Car. To pretend to be a woman of pleasure, and not have the benefit of the character——

Jul. Is what, it seems, you are not acquainted with. But for the future, Sir, you may believe there are women who won't be provok'd to injure their husbands.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a letter for you at home: the messenger will deliver it to no body, but your self.

Car.

The Fatal Marriage;

Car. How? I must look about me then, I'll go with you. *[Exit with the servant.]*

Jaq. Sir, Sir, I think I hear him stir in the tomb.

[A noise in the tomb.]

Fab. We'll be within call, *Jaqueline*, begin as soon as you please. *[Jaqueline with others singing in procession.]*

[Fernando pushes off the tomb-stone, and stares about.]

Fern. Heigh ho! where am I now? who are you? what wou'd you have with me? ha!

Jaq. Bless me! what do I see! *appropinquate in nomine...*

Fern. O good Sir! have a care of your hard words; you may raise the devil before you're aware of it; I have had too much of his company already. *(vil.)*

Jaq. Avant, speak I conjure thee; if thou art the de-

Fern. O! no, Sir, I am none of the devil; though I have seen him very lately.

Jaq. What art thou?

Fern. Truly that's a very hard question at present; when I was in the land of the living, my name was *Fernando*, an old, jealous, covetous fellow; but what I am in this country, whether I am *Fernando*, or no——

Jaq. *Fernando!* save thee *Fernando!* what, coming out of thy grave!

Fern. From whence I am coming, or whither I am going, I can't tell you; but I have been in very bad company I remember; I have seen the devil.

Jaq. Our prayers are heard; we have been fasting, and praying thee out of purgatory ever since thou wert buried.

Fern. Buried! have I been buried too?

Jaq. And now coming by thy grave in procession, what a miracle is wrought for thee, to bring thee to life again!

Fern. Nay, if I am alive again, 'tis a miracle, that's certain; but are you sure I am alive?

Jaq. Why, don't you find you are alive?

Fern. Alas! Sir, I have been so often mistaken of late, I don't know what to say to't; I thought I was alive in purgatory; and stood in't a good while; but there's no contending with the devil in his own dominions, you know;

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 51

know ; I was forc'd to confess my self, at last, as dead as a herring.

Jaq. O *Fernando!* be thankful for a good wife and son, they have shewn themselves so, in their sorrow for you, ever since you were bury'd.

Fern. Ay, ay, I heard of 'em ; how have they done since I left 'em ?

Jaq. They have made a hard shift ; their sorrow is pretty well over now ; but 'twas a great while before they were to be comforted ; a great while indeed before they could be persuaded to forget you ; but we must live by the living, you know.

Fern. That's very true.

Jaq. Your son *Fabian*, upon your death, was releas'd out of the monastery ; it had been a pity, you know, that a good estate should have wanted an heir.

Fern. Ay, so it had indeed.

Jaq. Yours was a very good one, I hear.

Fern. So, so, competent, and enough for me ; as it is, I shall be glad to enjoy it a little longer I believe ; I thank you, Sir, for bringing me to it again. But my wife, is my dear wife well ? you know her too ?

Jaq. She has had a great many good offers, since your death ; and truly 'twas very much for a young widow to refuse 'em ; but she resolves never to marry again.

Fern. Alack-a-day ! I am beholden to her——

Jaq. They say you were jealous of her——

Fern. Indeed I am, very much beholden to her.

Jaq. That you were extreamly jealous.

Fern. Alas ! alas ! I do confess it ; I was an old fool ; and she was too good for me : but if I ever see her again——

Jaq. Here they come, your virtuous wife, and son ; pray learn to value 'em.

Enter Fabian, Julia, Frederick, and Victoria.

Fab. Is't possible !

Jul. What ! risen from the dead !

Fab. May I believe my eyes ?

Fern. Ay, ay, you may believe your eyes.

Jul. The very shrowd my husband was bury'd in !

Fern.

Fern. The very same, the very same ; pray help me out on't, as soon as you can, for I look but oddly, I believe.

Fab. Well enough truly, Sir, for a man, that has been bury'd. You look well enough, but you smell a little of the place you came from, that I must own to you.

[*Fernando smells himself.*]

Fern. Nay, like enough, tho' I don't perceive it my self; but have I been bury'd long enough to stink then ?

Fab. Fie, Sir, stink ! you don't positively stink ; you have only an earthly savour, or so, with lying in the grave without eating ; that's all, I believe.

Fern. Nay, when I was alive, my breath was none of the best, especially from an empty stomach.

Fab. A day or two more had made it intolerable.

Fern. Ah, wife ! I have suffer'd a great deal upon your account——

Jul. Alas ! upon my account !

Fern. Upon the account of my jealousy; but I deserv'd it: jealousy is a damnable sin there, I shall never be jealous more.

Jul. 'Tis well it has wrought that cure upon you.

Fern. Nay, you shall henceforward go when and where you please: come when, and how you please ; say what, and to whom you please ; and in fine, if you have a mind to be reveng'd of me, you shall make me what you please : and that I'm sure will please you.

Jul. Leave that to me, husband.

Fern. Fabian, you look melancholy; don't be sorry that I am alive again: you have some friends in the other world, that put me in mind of you : I'll settle half my Estate upon you in present ; and when I die—who's that, *Frederick* ? you marry'd my daughter, I remember——

Vic. Indeed, Sir, I had more grace, than to dispose of my self without your consent ; and more respect for your family, than to marry any man without a portion.

Fred. If you please to give a blessing to our endeavours, we have agreed upon the point to make you a grandfather.

Fern. Why that's well said : you have my consent ; marry her, and I'll give her a portion ; but be sure you are as good as your word.

Fred.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 53

Fred. In what, Sir ?

Fern. In making me a grandfather : I am so over-joy'd that I am alive again, I care not how many children I have to provide for.

Vict. You see the fruits of jealousy.

Fred. I'll keep out of purgatory I warrant you.

Fern. O don't name it, good son in-law : I shall never get it out of my mind ; that's certain. Come my dear wife, and children, I owe my deliverance to your Intercession and piety ; since you have brought me to life again, you shall have no cause for the future, to wish me dead : some fifty years hence I may be contented to go to heav'n ; without calling by the way.

In the mean time, husbands who doubt my story,
May find in jealousy their purgatory. [Exeunt.

SCENE *the Street.*

Biron and Bellford just arriv'd.

Bir. The longest day will have an end : we are got home at last.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty ; and liberty is home, where-e'er we go : tho' mine lies most in *England*.

Bir. pray let me call this yours : for what I can command in *Bruxelles*, you shall find your own. I have a father here, who perhaps, after seven years absence, and costing him nothing in my travels, may be glad to see me. You know my story—— [Knocks at the door.
how does my beard become me ?

Bel. Just as you would have it, 'tis natural, and not your own.

Bir. To morrow you shall be sure to find me here, as early as you please. This is the house ; you have observ'd the street.

Bel. I warrant you ; I han't many visits to make, before I come to you.

Bir. To night I have some affairs, that will oblige me to be private.

Bel.

Bel. A good bed is the privatest affair, that I desire to be engag'd in to night ; your directions will carry me to my lodgings. [Exit.

Biron knocks again. Sampson enters to him.

Sam. Who's there ? what would you have ?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend ?

Sam. Why, truly friend, it is my employment to answer impertinent questions. But for my lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know whether it pleases her or no ?

Sam. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again : she never pleases to see any body at this time of night, that she does not know ; and by the length of your beard, you may be grown out of her remembrance.

Bir. But I have business ; and you don't know how that may please her.

Sam. Nay, if you have business, she is the best judge, whether your business will please her or no : therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady, whether or no she is pleas'd to be at home, or no— [Going.

Enter Nurse to them.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal ? methinks you might have found out an answer in fewer words : but *Sampson*, you love to hear your self prate sometimes, as well as your betters, that I must say for you. Let me come to him ; who wou'd you speak with ?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you can help me to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, Sir, I can help you, in a civil way : but can no body do your business but my lady ?

Bir. Not so well : but if you'll carry her this ring, she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope : you look like a civil gentleman : in an honest way I may bring you an answer. [Exit Nurse.

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older ! they say the tongue grows always : mercy on me ! then hers is seven years longer, since I left her. Yet there's something in these servants folly pleases me : the cautious conduct of
the

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 55

the family appears, and speaks in their impertinence.
Well, mistress——

Nurse returns.

Nurse. I have deliver'd your ring, Sir, pray heav'n
you bring no bad news along with you.

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too; but my lady was very
much surpriz'd when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a ser-
vant as a body may say, but if you'll walk in, that I may
shut the doors, for we keep very orderly hours, I can
shew you into the parlour, and help you to an answer,
perhaps, as soon as those that are wiser. [Exeunt.]

SCENE *A bed-chamber.*

A woman servant spreading a table.

Enter Isabella.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magick spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course :
The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down
From her career, still paler, and subdu'd
To the abuses of this under world :
Now I believe all possible. This ring,
This little ring, with necromantick force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears ;
Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from my self :
I dare not think of them—— [Servant goes out.
I'll call you when I want you.

Enter nurse.

Nurse. Madam, the gentleman's below.

Isa. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.

[Exit nurse.]

This ring was the first present of my love
To *Biron*, my first husband : I must blush
To think I have a second : *Biron* dy'd
(Still to my loss) at *Candy* ; there's my hope.
O! do I live to hope that he dy'd there !
It must be so : he's dead ; and this ring left

By

By his last breath, to some known, faithful friend,
To bring me back again. [*Biron introduc'd, nurse retir'd.*]
That's all I have to trust to——

My fears were woman's : I have view'd him all :
And let me, let me say it to my self,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite ?

Isa. Forgot you !

Bir. Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.
My Isabella !

[*He goes to her, she shrieks, and falls into a swoon.*]

Isa. Ha !

Bir. O ! come again :

Thy *Biron* summons thee to life and love ;
Once I had charms to wake thee.
Thy once lov'd, ever loving husband calls :
Thy *Biron* speaks to thee.

Isa. My husband ! *Biron !*

Bir. Excess of love, and joy, for my return,
Has over-power'd her—— I was to blame
To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd :
But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,
This ecstasie has made my welcome more
Than words could say : words may be counterfeit,
False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,
Without the mind ; but passion's in the soul,
And always speaks the heart. (me ?

Isa. Where have I been ? why do you keep him from
I know his voice : my life upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again.
'Tis he himself, my *Biron*, the dear man !
My true lov'd husband ! do I hold you fast,
Never to part again ? can I believe it ?
Nothing but you could work so great a change.
There's more than life it self in dying here :
If I must fall, 'tis welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.

Isa. But pardon me,
Excuse the wild disorder of my soul :
The strange, surprizing joy of seeing you,

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 57

Of seeing you again ; distracted me——

Bir. Thou everlasting goodness !

Isa. Answer me :

What hand of providence has brought you back
To your own home again ? O satisfy
Th' impatience of my heart : I long to know
The story of your sufferings. You wou'd think
Your pleasures sufferings, so long remov'd
From *Isabella's* love : but tell me all,
For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life ; at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead ; kill'd at the siege of *Candy*.

Bir. There I fell among the dead :

But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,
I was preserv'd, but to be made a slave.
I often writ to my hard father, but never had
An answer. I writ to thee too——

Isa. What a world of woe

Had been prevented, but in hearing from you !

Bir. Alas thou could'st not help me.

Isa. You do not know how much I cou'd ha' done ;

At least, I'm sure I cou'd have suffer'd all :

I wou'd have sold my self to slavery,
Without redemption ; giv'n up my child,
The dearest part of me, to basest wants——

Bir. My little boy !

Isa. My life, but to have heard

You were alive——which now too late I find. [*Aside.*]

Bir. No more, my love ! complaining of the past,

We lose the present joy : 'tis over price
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again,
I have a thousand things to say to thee——

Isa. Would I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*]

Bir. How does my child, my boy ? my father too,
I hear, he is living still.

Isa. Well, both, both well :

And may he prove a father to your hopes ;
Tho' we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.

Isa. Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me——

Bir. And all my days behind
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompence
For thy afflictions——Can't I see my boy ?

Isa. He's gone to bed : I'll have him brought to you.

Bir. To-morrow I shall see him ; I want rest
My self, after my weary pilgrimage.

Isa. Alas ! what shall I get for you ?

Bir. Nothing but rest, my love ! to night I would not
Be known, if possible, to your family ;
I see my nurse is with you ; her welcome
would be tedious at this time ;
To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her ; and order every thing
As you would have it.

[*Exit.*

Bir. Grant me but life, good heav'n, and give the
means

To make this wondrous goodness some amends ;
And let me then forget her, if I can !
Oh ! she deserves of me much more, than I
Can lose for her, tho' I again could venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love.
You wretched fathers ! blind as fortune all !
Not to perceive that such a woman's worth
Weighs down the portions, you provide your sons.
What has she, in my absence, undergone ?
I must not think of that ; it drives me back
Upon my self, the fated cause of all.

Isabella returns.

Isa. I have obey'd your pleasure ;
Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here ; possessing thee,
All my desires are carried to their aim
Of happiness ; there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me.
I know the way, my love, I shall sleep sound.

Isa. Shall I help to undress you ?

Bir.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 59

Bir. By no means;

I've been so long a slave to others pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon my self;
You'll make haste after——

[*Goes in.*]

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you——

My prayers! no, I must ne'er pray again.
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes:
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What heav'n cou'd give, I have enjoy'd; but now
The baneful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come, is a long line of woe;
Yet I may shorten it——

I promis'd him to follow——him!
Is he without a name? *Biron*, my husband:
To follow him to bed——my husband! ha!
What then is *Villeroy*? but yesterday
That very bed receiv'd him for its lord;
Yet a warm witness of my broken vows,
To send another to usurp his room.

O *Biron*! hadst thou come but one day sooner,
I wou'd have follow'd thee through beggary,
Through all the chances of this weary life,
Wander'd the many ways of wretchedness
With thee, to find a hospitable grave;

For that's the only bed that's left me now. [*Weeping.*]

——What's to be done——for something must be done.

Two husbands! yet not one! ——by both enjoy'd,
And yet a wife to neither! hold my brain——

This is to live in common! very beasts,
That welcome all they meet, make just such wives.

My reputation! O, 'twas all was left me;
The virtuous pride of an uncensur'd life;
Which, the dividing tongues of *Biron*'s wrongs,
And *Villeroy*'s resentments tear asunder,
To gorge the throats of the blaspheming rabble.

This is the best of what can come to-morrow.

Besides old *Baldwin*'s triumph in my ruin.

I cannot bear it——

Therefore no morrow. Ha! a lucky thought

Works the right way to rid me of 'em all,
 All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
 That every tongue and finger will find for me.
 Let the just horror of my apprehensions
 But keep me warm——no matter what can come.
 'Tis but a blow——if it should miss my heart
 ——But every part is mortal to such wounds.
 Yet I will see him first——
 Have a last look to heighten my despair,
 And then to rest for ever——

[*Going.*]*Biron meets her.*

Bir. Despair ! and rest for ever ! *Isabella !*
 These words are far from thy condition ;
 And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
 And cou'd not bear thy absence ; come, my love !
 You have staid long, there's nothing, nothing sure
 Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
 But not this way ; I've been too long abus'd,
 And can believe no more ;
 Let me sleep on, to be deceiv'd no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
 Nor ever can ; believe thy self, thy eyes
 That first inflam'd, and lit me to thy love,
 Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing. I look round
 And find no path, but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

Isa. My good friends above,
 I thank 'em, have at last found out a way,
 To make my fortune perfect ; having you,
 I need no more ; my fate is finish'd here.

Bir. Both our ill fates, I hope.

Isa. Hope is a lying, fawning flatterer,
 That shews the fair side only of our fortunes,
 To cheat us easier into our fall ;
 A trusted friend, who only can betray you ;
 Never believe him more. If marriages

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 61

Are made in heav'n, they should be happier.

Why was I made this wretch ?

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched ?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so ?

Isa. Why ! what^d did I say ?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No : you are my only earthly happiness,
And my false tongue bely'd my honest heart,
If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said :
I've said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild ; my eyes, my ears, my heart
Were all so full of thee, so much employ'd
In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it :
Now I perceive it plain——

Isa. You'll tell no body—— [*Distractedly.*

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not ; I knew that before,
But where's the remedy ?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares : come, come, no more ;
I'll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heav'n knows how willingly.

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause ? the cause of thy misfortunes ?

Isa. The *fatal innocent* cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home ? this the reward
Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
And pining wants of wretched slavery,
Which I've out-liv'd, only in hopes of thee ?
Am I thus paid at last for deathless love ?
And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now ?

Isa. Enquire no more ; 'twill be explain'd too soon.

[*She is going.*

Bir. What ! canst thou leave me too ? [*He stays her.*

Isa.

Isa. Pray let me go :
For both our sakes permit me——

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations
Of things impossible——thou can'st not mean
What thou hast said——yet something she must mean.
——'T was madness all——compose thy self, my love!
The fit is past ; all may be well again.
Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed ! you've rais'd the storm
Will sever us for ever. O my *Biron* !
While I have life, still I must call you mine :
I know I am, and always was unworthy
To be the happy partner of your love :
And now must never, never share it more.
But, oh ! if ever I was dear to you,
As sometimes you have thought me ; on my knees,
(The last time I shall care to be believ'd)
I beg you, beg to think me innocent,
Clear of all crimes, that thus can banish me
From this world's comforts, in my losing you.

Bir. Where will this end ?

Isa. The rugged hand of fate has got between
Our meeting hearts, and thrusts 'em from their joys.
Since we must part——

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

Isa. Parting's the least that is set down for me :
Heav'n has decreed, and we must suffer all.

Bir. I know thee innocent ; I know my self so.
Indeed we both have been unfortunate :
But sure misfortunes ne'er were faults in love.

Isa. Oh ! there's a fatal story to be told ;
Be deaf to that, as heav'n has been to me !
And rot the tongue that shall reveal my shame.
when thou shalt hear how much thou hast been wrong'd
How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,
Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,
And throw me like a pois'nous weed away.
Can I bear that ? bear to be curst and torn,
And thrown out from thy family and name,

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 63

Like a disease ? can I bear this from thee ?

I never can ; no, all things have their end.

When I am dead, forgive and pity me.

[*Exit.*

Bir. Yet stay, if the sad news at last must come,

Thou art my fate, and best may speak my doom.

[*Exit after her.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Biron, Nurse following him.

Bir. I Know enough : th' important question
Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,
Is clear'd to me : I see where it must end ;
And need enquire no more — pray let me have
Pen, ink, and paper, I must write a while,
And then I'll try to rest — to rest ! for ever. [*Exit nurse.*
Poor *Isabella* ! now I know the cause,
The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder
That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back
Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.
O, any curse but this might be remov'd !
But 'twas the rancorous malignity
Of all ill stars combin'd ; of heav'n, and fate,
To put it quite out of their mercies reach,
To speak peace to us : if they could repent,
They cannot help us now. Alas ! I rave :
Why do I tax the stars, or heav'n, or fate ?
They are all innocent of driving us
Into despair ; they have not urg'd my doom.
My father, and my brother are my fates,
That drive me to my ruin. They knew well
I was alive : too well they knew how dear
My *Isabella* — O my wife no more !
How dear her love was to me — yet they stood,
With a malicious silent joy, stood by,

And

And saw her give up all my happiness,
 The treasure of her beauty, to another,
 Stood by, and saw her married to another.
 O cruel father ! and unnatural brother !
 Shall I not tell you that you have undone me ?
 I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,
 And then to fall forgotten——sleep, or death,
 Sits heavy on me, and benums my pains :
 Either is welcome ; but the hand of death
 Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[*Exit Biron.*]

Enter Nurse and Sampson.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, *Sampson* : what will be the end of 'em, do you think ?

Sam. Nay, marry *Nurse*, I can't see so far ; but the law, I believe, is on *Biron*, the first husband's side.

Nurse. Yes ; no question, he has the law on his side.

Sam. For I have heard, the law says, a woman must be a widow, all out seven years, before she can marry again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does ; and our lady has not been a widow altogether seven years.

Sam. Why then, *Nurse*, mark my words, and say I told you so : the man must have his mare again, and all will do well.

Nurse. But if our new master *Villeroy* comes back again——

Sam. Why, if he does, he is not the first man that has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the old Count, desire him to come as soon as he can, there may be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.

Sam. Now you say something, now I take you, *Nurse*, that will do well indeed : mischief should be prevented ; a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it instantly——

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 65

SCENE *drawn, shews Biron asleep on a Couch.*

Isabella comes in to him.

Isa. Asleep so soon ! O happy ! happy thou !
Who thus can't sleep : I never shall sleep more.
If then to sleep be to be happy, he
Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest ;
Death is the longest sleep. O ! have a care,
Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more ; [*To Bir.*
If thou didst ever love thy *Isabella*,
To-morrow must be dooms-day to thy peace.
—— The sight of him disarms ev'n death it self.
—— The starting transport of new quick'ning life
Gives just such hopes ; and pleasure grows again
With looking on him——let me look my last——
But is a look enough for parting love !
Sure I may take a kiss——where am I going !
Help, help me, *Villeroy* !——mountains, and seas
Divide your love never to meet my shame.

[*Throws her self upon the floor ; after a short pause,*
she raises her self upon her elbow.

What will this battel of the brain do with me !
This little ball, this ravag'd province, long
Cannot maintain——the globe of earth wants room
And food for such a war——I find I'm going——
Famine, plagues, and flames,
Wide waste and desolation, do your work
Upon the world, and then devour your selves,
——The scene shifts fast—— [*She rises.*] and now 'tis
better with me,
Conflicting passions have at last unhing'd
The great machine ; the soul it self seem'd chang'd :
O, 'tis a happy revolution here !
The reas'ning faculties are all depos'd,
Judgment, and understanding, common sense,
Driv'n out ; as traitors to the publick peace.
Now I'm reveng'd upon my memory.

Her

Her seat dug up, where all the images
Of a long mis-spent life, were rising still,
To glare a sad reflection of my crimes,
And stab a conscience thro' 'em : you are safe,
You monitors of mischief ! what a change !
Better and better still ! this is the infant state
Of innocence, before the birth of care.
My thoughts are smooth as the *Elysian* plains
Without a rub : the drowsie falling streams
Invite me to their slumbers.

Would I were landed there ——— [*Sinks into a chair.*

What noise was that ! a knocking at the gate !

It may be *Villeroy* ——— no matter who.

Bir. Come, *Isabella*, come ——— [*Biron in a dream.*

Isa. Hark, I am call'd.

Bir. You stay too long for me.

Isa. A man's voice ! in my bed ! how came he there ?

[*Rises.*

Nothing but villany in this bad world ;
Coveting neighbours goods, or neighbours wives ;
Cuckolds or cuckold-makers every where ;
Here's physick for your fever.

[*Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.*

Breathing a vein is the old remedy.

Why, at this rate, 'tis impossible for an
Honest man to keep his wife to himself ;
The trade must thrive, they say.

If husbands go to heav'n,

Where do they go, that send 'em ? — this to try.

[*Just going to stab him, he rises, she knows him.*

What do I see !

[*Shrieks.*

Bir. My *Isabella* ! arm'd !

Isa. Against my husband's life !

Who, but the wretch, most reprobate to grace,
Despair ever hard'n'd for damnation,
Could think of such a deed ! murder my husband !

Bir. Thou didst not think it.

Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of hell,
And there has left me. O the frightful change

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 67

Of my distractions ! or is this interval
Of reason, but to aggravate my woes ;
To drive the horror back with greater force
Upon my soul, and fix me mad for ever ?

Bir. Why dost thou fly me so ?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight ; distraction, come,
Possess me all, and take me to thy self ;
Shake off thy chains, and hasten to my aid ;
Thou art my only cure——like other friends,
He wonnot come to my necessities ;
Then I must go to find the tyrant out ;
Which is the nearest way ?——— *[Running out.]*

Bir. Poor *Isabella*, she's not in a condition
To give me any comfort, if she could ;
Lost to her self ; as quickly I shall be
To all the world. Death had been most welcome,
From any hand but hers ; she never could
Deserve to be the executioner,
To take my life ; nor I to fall by her.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Sir, there's some body at the door, must needs
speak with you ; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him——

[Exit Nurse.]

'Tis *Bellford*, I suppose ; he little knows
Of what has happen'd here ; I wanted him,
And must employ his friendship——— *[Exit.]*

SCENE *changes to the Street.*

Carlos enters with three ruffians.

Car. A younger brother ! I was one too long,
Not to prevent my being so again——
We must be sudden——younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth
And family, and tainted into trades.
Shall I be one of 'em ? bow, and retire,
To make more room for the unwieldy heir
To play the fool in ? No.

But

But how shall I prevent it! *Biron* comes,
 To take possession of my father's love;
 Would that were all; there is a birth-right too
 That he will seize——besides, if *Biron* lives
 He will unfold some practices, which I
 Cannot well answer——therefore he shall die;
 This night must be dispos'd of: I have means
 That will not fail my purpose——here he comes.

Bir. Ha! am I beset? I live but to revenge me.

[*They surround him fighting; Villeroy enters with two servants, they rescue him; Carlos and his party run. Biron very much wounded, one of Villeroy's servants struggling on the ground with one of the ruffians.*]

Vil. How are you, Sir? mortally hurt, I fear.
 Take care and lead him in. [*Biron led in by a servant.*
Ser. Here's one of 'em. [*Villeroy and servant secure him.*
Vil. O, 'tis very well; I'll make you an example.

[*They lead him in.*]

SCENE *changes to the Inside of the House.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Murder my husband! O! I must not dare
 To think of living on; my desperate hand,
 In a mad rage, may offer it again;
 Stab any where, but there. Here's room enough
 In my own breast, to act the fury in,
 The proper scene of mischief. *Villeroy* comes;
Villeroy and *Biron* come: O! hide me from 'em——
 They rack, they tear; let 'em carve out my limbs,
 Divide my body to their equal claims:
 My soul is only *Biron's*; that is free,
 And thus I strike for him, and liberty.

[*Going to stab her self, Villeroy runs in, and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.*]

Vil. Angels defend and save thee!
 Attempt thy precious life! the treasury
 Of nature's sweets! life of my little world!
 Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!

Isa.

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 69

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.
What would you have with me? pray let me go.

—Are you there, Sir? you are the very man
Have done all this—you would have made
Me believe, you married me; but the fool,
Was wiser, I thank you; 'tis not all gospel
You men preach upon that subject.

Vil. Dost thou not know me?

Isa. O, yes, very well.

[*Staring on him.*]

You are the widow's comforter, that marries
Any woman, when her husband's out of the way.
But I'll never, never take your word again.

Vil. I am thy loving husband.

Isa. I have none; no husband——

[*Weeping.*]

Never had but one, and he dy'd at Candy,
Did he not? I'm sure you told me so; you,
Or some body, with just such a lying look,
As you have now: speak, did he not die there?

Vil. He did, my life!

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Biron enters bloody, and leaning upon his sword.

Before that screaming evidence appears,
In bloody proof against me——

[*She seeing Biron swoons into a chair, Vil. helps her.*]

Vil. Help there, nurse, where are you?

Ha! I am distracted too! [*Going to call for help sees Biron.*]
Biron alive!

Bir. The only wretch on earth, that must not live.

Vil. *Biron*, or *Villeroy* must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers:
Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague:
And then of all the world, you are the man
I would not be oblig'd to——*Isabella!*
I come to fall before thee: I had dy'd
Happy, not to have found your *Villeroy* here.

Along farewell, and a last parting kiss. [*Kisses her.*]

Vil. A kiss, confusion! it must be your last. [*Draws.*]

Bir. I know it must——here I give up that death
You but delay'd, since what is past has been

The

The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure——

[*Falls down.*]

Vil. Alas ! he faints ! some help there.

Bir. This letter is my last, last dying care :

Give it my father——

[*Dies.*]

Vil. He's gone : let what will be the consequence,

I'll give it him. I have involv'd my self,

And would be clear'd ; that must be thought on now.

My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Going to Isa.*]

Are you all dead within there ? where, where are you ?

[*Exit.*]

Isabella comes to her self.

Isa. Where have I been ! methinks I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph

That lyes between me and the realms of rest ;

But still detain'd, I cannot pass the streight :

Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die.

Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To my unburied body——here it lyes,

[*Throws herself by Biron's body.*]

My body, soul, and life. A little dust

To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave,

There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter Villeroy with Servants.

Vil. Poor wretch ! upon the ground ! she's not her self.

Remove her from the body. [*Servants going to raise her.*]

Isa. Never, never :

You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more.

Help, help me, *Biron* ; ha ! bloody and dead !

O murder, murder ! you have done this deed !

Vengeance and murder ! bury us together ;

Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her——

She must be forc'd away.

[*She drags the body after her, they get her into their arms, and carry her off.*]

Isa. O, they tear me ! cut off my hands.

Let me leave something with him,

They'll clasp him fast——

Or, *The Innocent Adultery.* 71

O cruel, cruel men !

This you must answer one day.

Vil. Good nurse, take care of her : [*Nurse follows her.*

Send for all helps : all, all that I am worth,

Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

Be sure you do

[*To a Servant.*

Just as I order'd you. The storm grows loud,

[*Knocking at the door.*

I am prepar'd for it ; now let them in.

Enter Count Baldwin, Carlos, Bellford, Frederick,

with Servants.

C. Bal. O do I live to this unhappy day ?

Where is my wretched son ?

Car. Where is my brother ?

[*They see him, and gather about the body.*

Vil. I hope in heav'n.

Car. Can'st thou pity him,

With him in heav'n ? when thou hast done a deed,

That must for ever cut thee from the hopes

Of ever coming there.

Vil. I do not blame you,

You have a brother's right to be concern'd

For his untimely death ———

Car. Untimely death indeed !

Vil. But yet you must not say, I was the cause.

Car. Not you the cause ! why, who should murder

We do not ask you to accuse your self : (him ?

But I must say that you have murder'd him :

And will say nothing else, till justice draws

Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,

To execute so foul a murderer .

Bel. Poor *Biron* ? is this thy welcome home !

Fred. Rise, Sir, there is a comfort in revenge,

Which yet is left you.

[*To C. Baldwin.*

Car. Take the body hence.

[*Biron carry'd off.*

C. Bald. What could provoke you ?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me

To a base murder ; which I find you think

Me guilty of : I know my innocence :

My servants too can witness that I drew

My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel.

Bel. Let the servants be call'd.

Fred. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say! why, what should servants say?

They're his accomplices, his instruments,
And wonnot charge themselves. If they could do
A murder for his service; they can lie,
Lie nimbly; and swear hard to bring him off.
You say, you drew your sword in his defence?
Who were his enemies? did he need defence?
Had he wrong'd any one? could he have cause
To apprehend a danger but from you?
And yet you rescu'd him! no, no, he came
Unseasonably, (that was all his crime)
Unluckily to interrupt your sport:
You were new marry'd, marry'd to his wife;
And therefore you, and she, and all of you;
(For all of you I must believe concern'd)
Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so.

Car. It can be only so.

Fred. Indeed it has a face.

Car. As black as hell.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice: send for the magistrate.

Car. I'll go my self for him——

[Exit.

Vil. These strong presumptions, I must own indeed,
Are violent against me; but I have
A witness, and on this side heav'n too.

Fred. What cries are those?

Vil. Open that door.

SCENE open'd shews Pedro on a Rack.

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all: take me but from the rack I'll confess
all. I can hold out no longer.

Vil. You and your accomplices design'd
To murder Biron? speak.

Ped. We did.

Vil.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 73

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were set on then.

Ped. O! we were set on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing:

You sav'd his life; and have discover'd me.

Vil. Take him down.

C. Bald. Hold.

Vil. He has acquitted me.

If you wou'd be resolv'd of any thing,

He stands upon his answer.

C. Bald. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?

Ped. Kill me out-right; let all the guilt be mine.

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick his
name,

Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

Pull hard, rack, torture him——

Ped. O! I confess.

C. Bald. Do then.

Ped. It was my master *Carlos*, your own son.

C. Bald. O monstrous! monstrous! most unnatural!

Fred. Did he employ you to murder his own brother?

Ped. He did, and he was with us when 'twas done.

C. Bald. If this be true, which is impossible,
It is but just upon me: *Biron's* wrongs
Must be reveng'd; and I the cause of all.

Fred. What will you do with him?

C. Bal. Now take him down:

[*Pedro taken from the rack.*]

I know too much.

Vil. I had forgot: your wretched, dying son,
Gave me this letter for you. [Gives it to Baldwin]

I dare deliver it: if it speaks of me,
I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand.

Bel. I know 'tis *Biron's* hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it.

Bellford reads the Letter.

SIR,

I Find I am come only to lay my death at your door: I am now going out of the world, but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos, for not hindring my poor wife Isabella from marrying with Villeroy, when you both knew, from so many letters, that I was alive.——

BIRON.

Vil. How! did you know it then?

C. Bald. Amazement! all.

Enter Carlos with Officers.

O Carlos! are you come? your brother here,
Here in a wretched letter, lays his death
On you, and me: have you done any thing
To hasten his sad end?

Car. blefs me, Sir, I do any thing? who, I!

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent to us:
I never heard of any: did you know
He was alive?

Car. Alive! heav'n knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report,
Or letter never?

Car. Never, never I.

Bel. That's strange indeed: I know he often writ
To lay before you the condition [To Baldwin.
Of his hard slavery: and more I know,
That he had several answers of his letters:
He said they came from you; you are his brother.

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.

The letters I believe are still about him;
For some of them I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;
But I remember well, the sum of 'em
Was much the same, and all agreed,
That there was nothing to be hop'd from you;
That 'twas your barbarous resolution,
To let him perish there.

C. Bald.

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 75

C. Bald. O *Carlos!* *Carlos!* hadst thou been a brother.

Car. This is a plot upon me; I never knew

He was in slavery, or was alive,
Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, Sir, I must confront you:

He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night;
And you sent him word you wou'd come to him:

I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.

Bring out that wretch before him. [*Pedro produc'd.*]

Car. Ha! *Pedro* there! then I am caught indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him,
He has confest the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confest,
And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more?

Car. Why, what would you have more? I know the
worst,

And I expect it.

C. Bal. Why hast thou done all this?

Car. Why, that which damns most men, has ruin'd
The making of my fortune. *Biron* stood (me,
Between me, and your favour; while he liv'd,
I had not that; hardly was thought a son;
And not at all a-kin to your estate.
I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending, upon courtesie.
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true,
I never lov'd thee, as I should have done;
It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.
O! never may distinction rise again
In families: let parents be the same
To all their children; common in their care,
And in their love of 'em: I am unhappy
For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother liv'd; why did you take
Such pains to marry me to *Isabella*?

Car. I had my reasons for't——

Fred.

Fred. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this ;

I knew my brother lov'd his wife so well,
That if he ever shou'd come home again,
He cou'd not long out-live the loss of her.

Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him ?

Car. To make all sure. Now you are answer'd all.
Where must I go ? I'm tir'd of your questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art ;
A father cannot find a name for thee.
But parricide is highest treason sure
To sacred nature's law ; and must be so,
So sentenc'd in thy crimes. Take him away——
The violent remedy is found at last,
That drives thee out, thou poison of my blood,
Infected long, and only foul in thee. [*Carlos led off.*
Grant me, sweet heav'n, thy patience, to go through
The torment of my cure——here, here begins
The operation——alas ! she's mad.

*Enter Isabella distracted, held by her women, her hair
dishevel'd, her little son running in before, being a-
fraid of her.*

Vil. My *Isabella* ! poor unhappy wretch !
What can I say to her ?

Isa. Nothing, nothing, 'tis a babling world,
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit ?
I'll not be bought, what ! to sell innocent blood !
You look like one of the pale judges here,
Minos, or *Rhadamanth*, or *Æacus*,
I have heard of you.
I have a cause to try, an honest one ;
Will you not hear it ? then I must appeal
To the bright throne, call down the heav'nly powers
To witness how you use me.

Wom. Help, help, we cannot hold her.

Vil. You but enrage her more.

C. Bald. Pray give her way, she'll hurt no body.

Isa. What have you done with him ? he was here but
now ;

I saw him here. Oh *Biron*, *Biron* ! where,

Where

Or, The Innocent Adultery. 77

Where have they hid thee from me? he is gone——
But here's a little flaming cherubin——

Child. O save me, save me! [*Running to Baldwin.*]

Isa. The *Mercury* of heav'n, with silver wings,
Impt for the flight, to overtake his ghost,
And bring him back again.

Child. I fear she'll kill me.

C. Bald. She wonnot hurt thee. [*She flings away.*]

Isa. Will nothing do! I did not hope to find
Justice on earth; 'tis not in heav'n neither.

Biron hath watch'd his opportunity.

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,
And sends it thus. [*Stabs her self.*]

Now, now I laugh at you, despise you all,
You tyrant, murderers.

Vil. Call, call for help: O heav'n! this was too much.

C. Bald. O! thou most injur'd innocence! yet live,
Live but to witness for me to the world,
How much I do repent me of the wrongs,
Th'unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,
And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. O speak, speak but a word of comfort to me.

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care, and love
Of thee, and thy poor child can make amends;
O yet look up, and live.

Isa. Where is that little wretch? [*They raise her.*]
I die in peace to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,
A dying kiss, pray let me give it him,
My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.

O may thy father's virtues live in thee:
And all his wrongs be buried in my grave.
The waves and winds will dash, and tempests roar;
But wrecks are toss'd at last upon the shoar. [*Dies.*]

Vil. She's gone, and all my joys of life with her.
Where are your officers of justice now?
Seize, bind me, drag me to the bloody bar.
Accuse, condemn me; let the sentence reach
My hated life, no matter how it comes,
I'll think it just, and thank you as it falls.

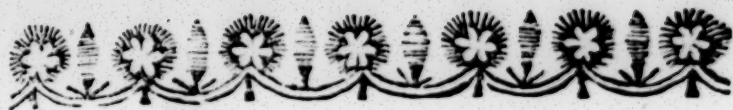
Self-

Self murder is deny'd me : else how soon
 Could I be past the pain of my remembrance !
 But I must live, grow grey with lingring grief,
 To die at last in telling this sad tale.

C. Bald. Poor wretched orphan of most wretched
 parents !

'Scaping the storm, thou'rt thrown upon a rock,
 To perish there ; the very rocks would melt,
 Soften their nature sure to foster thee :
 I find it by my self. My flinty heart,
 That barren rock, on which thy father starv'd,
 Opens its springs of nourishment to thee :
 There's not a vein but shall run milk for thee.
 O had I pardon'd my poor *Biron's* fault !
 His first, his only fault, this had not been.
 To erring youth there's some compassion due ;
 But while with rigour you their crimes pursue,
 What's their misfortune, is a crime in you.
 Hence learn offending children to forgive :
 Leave punishment to heav'n, 'tis heav'n's prerogative.





EPILOGUE,

NOW tell me, when you saw the lady die,
Were you not puzzled for a reason why?
A buxom damsel, and of play-house race,
Not to out-live th' enjoyment of a brace!
Were that the only marriage-curse in store,
How many would compound to suffer more,
And yet live on, with comfort, to threescore?
But on our Exits there is no relying:
We women are so whimsical in dying.
Some pine away for loss of ogling fellows:
Nay some have dy'd for love, as stories tell us:
Some, say our histories, though long ago,
For having undergone a rape, or so,
Plung'd the fell dagger, without more ado.
But time has laugh'd those follies out of fashion:
And sure they'll never gain the approbation
Of ladies, who consult their reputation.
For if a rape must be esteem'd a curse,
Grim death, and publication make it worse.
Should the opinion of the world be try'd,
They'll scarce give judgment on the plaintiff's side,
For all must own, 'tis most egregious nonsense,
To die for being pleas'd, with a safe conscience.
Nay, look not on your fans, nor turn away,
For tell me, ladies, why do you marry, pray?
But to enjoy your wishes, as you may.

F I N I S.

